METALSMITH

JEWELRY ▪ DESIGN ▪ METAL ARTS

Curated Exhibition in Print

"Framing the Art of Jewelry"
Invited Curator: Ellen Lupton

volume 27 number 4
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www.snagmetalsmith.org

Process Documented

October 16 – November 17

Glenda Arentzen
Klaus Bürgel
Harlan Butt
Petra Class
Peggy Eng
Barbara Heath
Barbara Heinrich
Melissa Huff
Sergey Jivetin
Debra Karash
Janis Kerman
Hongsock Lee
Brooke Marks-Swanson
Eleanor Moty
Bernd Munsteiner
Tod Pardon
Linda Kindler Priest
Kim Rawdin
Marjorie Simon
Susan Kasson Sloan
Jennifer Trask
Yumi Ueno
Alexandra Watkins

Double Pin. Repoussé 14K and 18K gold double pin, with sapphires, lapis lazuli, sterling silver.
By Linda Kindler Priest.
"Horus" bird pin, 1-5/8" x 2-1/4".
Lapis pin, 1-3/8" x 1-5/8".

SOFA Chicago

November 2 – November 4

SOFA LECTURE: "Three Perspectives on Process"
Melissa Huff – In the Studio
Tod Pardon – Not-So-Subliminal Influences
Bernd Munsteiner – From Then to Now: Art/Life/Family

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METALSMITH

EXHIBITION IN PRINT 2007

METALSMITH VOL 27 NO 4

CURATED EXHIBITION IN PRINT

FRAMING THE ART OF JEWELRY

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Bruce Metcalf
Costa Rican with Lips, 2004-2006
12 x 5"
18k and 14k yellow gold, 24k gold-plated brass, painted maple, 23k gold leaf
Photo:

PRINT

January 19 – May 11, 2008

Framing · the Art of Jewelry

The genesis of this exhibition comes from *Metalsmith's Exhibition in Print* 2007, published by the Society of North American Goldsmiths. Selected objects on view at Museum of Contemporary Craft in Portland, Oregon. Featuring a lecture by Ellen Lupton.

EXHIB ITION

January 19 – March 19, 2008

touching warms the art

Juried by Rebecca Scheer, Rachelle Thiewes and Namita Gupta Wiggers
Touch, try on and physically engage art jewelry in an interactive exhibition presented in conjunction with *Metalsmith's Exhibition in Print* 2007 and *Framing · the Art of Jewelry*.

INTER ACTION

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Museum of Contemporary Craft

FROM THE EDITOR

SUZANNE RAMLJAK

This is the thirteenth edition of *Metalsmith*'s annual Exhibition in Print (EiP). Established in 1994, the EiP has alternated each year between a juried and curated format, culled from artist entries or curatorial proposals. For this issue, we happily welcome Ellen Lupton as our first commissioned EiP curator, a role made possible through the generous support of the Rotasa Foundation.

Lupton brings considerable skill and acumen to the project. As curator of contemporary design at Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, she has organized several major exhibitions, among them *Feeding Desire: Design and the Tools of the Table, 1500–2005* (2006), and the *National Design Triennial* series (2000, 2003, 2006). Her numerous publications include the books *D.I.Y: Design It Yourself* (2006) and *Thinking with Type* (2004). In addition, she directs the MFA program in graphic design at Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore.

Although a seasoned design curator, Lupton entered the sphere of jewelry as a relative naïf. She was nonetheless seduced by works that "overflow with embellished surfaces and lush, painterly references as well as by pieces that are stark, conceptual, even raw." Lupton's baptism in contemporary jewelry yielded an epiphany: the "functions of adornment, presentation, and display produce a deep structural bond between jewelry and graphic design."

The fundamental functions of jewelry—to collect, connect, protect, and display—are explored in Lupton's essay, under the larger conceptual banner of "framing." The notion of framing is not only relevant to graphic design and jewelry, but also to Lupton's own curatorial endeavor, as she reframes our understanding of the medium and provides new context for a familiar form. Lupton also gave concrete structure to this EiP, as she designed the layout of the editorial pages, installing works on the "paper walls" of this printed gallery.

In revisiting the concept of the frame, Lupton also engages the original meaning of the word itself. Derived from the Old English, *framian*, the term initially meant, "to further, move forward, promote, or be helpful." Indeed, this curated EiP will contribute to the promotion and progress of contemporary jewelry.... ◘

METALSMITH

a publication of SNAG, the organization for jewelers, designers and metalsmiths

***Metalsmith's* mission is to document, analyze, and promote excellence in jewelry and metalworking.**

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DEGANIT STERN SCHOCKEN
HERZELIA, ISRAEL
How Many Is One: Anomalies
Graphic design: Yael Burstein and Koby Levy
Portrait photography: Roni Cnaan
Object photography: Uri Gershuni and David Adika

C O L L E C T

C O N N E C T

P R O T E C T

D I S P L A Y

Framing · The Art of Jewelry

EXHIBITION IN PRINT

2007

ELLEN LUPTON, CURATOR

BETTY COOKE
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND
Earrings, 2006
gold
2 × 1 inches

I OWN VERY LITTLE JEWELRY: a string of pearls, several pairs of earrings, a few simple necklaces. The pieces I wear most often are designed by Betty Cooke, the Baltimore-based modern jewelry designer. My favorite object of adornment is a pair of earrings by Cooke consisting of nothing more than two pieces of bent gold wire. These earrings have no jewel, no crowning ornament, no definitive conclusion. They have nothing to present, to put on view. They also have no closure, clasp, or nut, no mechanical element. The functional structure is one and the same as the decorative component.

In my role as a design curator, I am accustomed to looking at objects, furniture, interiors, and digital media, but my predominant interest lies with graphic design and the printed page. It was thus with both pleasure and trepidation that I accepted Suzanne Ramljak's invitation to wander into the enchanted forest of metalwork. I chose to focus on jewelry because I sensed a connection between the art of the jeweler and the art of the page. All the better that *Metalsmith* defines this annual project as an "exhibition in print." The concept of a printed exhibition is idiosyncratic yet powerful. The idea suggests a different kind of experience than a mere "special issue" with a "guest editor." The magazine can cease to be a magazine, as the pages become the white walls of a gallery, a space where a sequence of ideas and a conversation among objects can unfold.

The works assembled on these paper walls exist only as image. I was able to experience in the flesh the work of many of the artists featured here—in shops and galleries, at the "Schmuck 2006" exhibition hosted by the Museum of Arts & Design in New York City, and at the American Craft Show in Baltimore. Yet my experience with numerous pieces has been solely through the medium of photography.

As a graphic designer, I am often drawn to objects that have a strong pictorial presence. Some of the pieces shown on the following pages contain imagery, whether drawn, painted, scratched, found, hidden, exposed, framed, recirculated. Many have flat decorated surfaces. Pauline Wiertz works in porcelain, creating beads, rings, and pendants that support lush visual imagery, reframed in surprising ways. Other works build a rich rapport—even antagonism—between graphic and sculptural form. The recurrence of the image across this diverse body of work seems fitting for the flat destiny of an exhibition in print.

It is not only the lure of the image, however, that connects jewelry with the art of the page. The functions of adornment, presentation, and display produce a deep structural bond between jewelry and graphic design. The craft of the graphic designer hinges on presenting content: framing and cropping an image, setting the margins of a page, spacing and connecting letterforms into fields of text and chains of discourse. The work of graphic design takes place, literally, in the margins, in the spaces around and between the primary content of a book, catalogue, or magazine.

Graphic designers share this avid marginality with jewelers. Although jewelers today are striving to stake their claim at the center of the arts, the Western tradition has cast design and ornament in supporting roles. Ornament is the frame but not the picture. It is the vessel, the container, the border, the hors d'oeuvre, but not the main event.

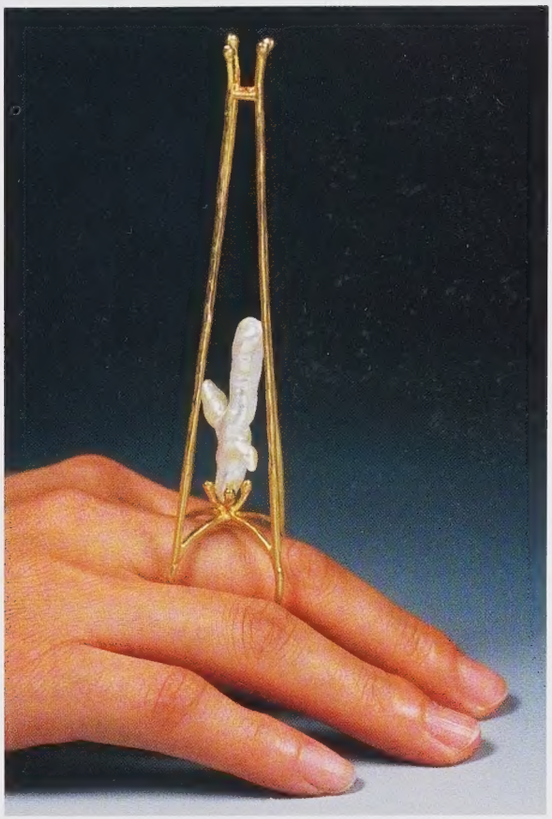
Necklaces, bracelets, rings, earrings: these objects are frames. They encircle parts of the body, bringing color, light, and even sound to the human figure. Jewelry decorates us not just through the materials and workmanship of each piece, but through the structural gesture of bracketing and underscoring the body. Betty Cooke's simple wire earrings appear to shed the mantle of decoration until one ponders their function: to set off and illuminate the face between twin parentheses of gold. Two pieces of bent gold wire become ornament when they become a frame.

PAULINE WIERTZ
AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS
AND LIMOGES, FRANCE
Earrings, 2006
porcelain, ceramic transfers, gold,
silver, jade, grenades, pearls
1¼ × ¾ inches
Courtesy Frederieke Taylor Gallery, New York
Photo: Ron Zijlstra

In addition to putting the wearer on display, jewelry sets forth precious or curious things: jewels, mementos, locks of hair, magical substances. The jeweler acts as a collector and a curator, assembling strange or beautiful objects and transforming them through juxtaposition and physical presentation. The jeweler creates a framework or setting that protects, illuminates, or even hides the sacred item. A group of rings by Liaung-Chung Yen presents oversized ornaments within excessive settings that would nearly immobilize the wearer. Yen's frames both protect and imprison the semiprecious objects they put on view, and likewise serve as dubious celebrations of the bodies they would adorn.

Jewelry artists constantly consider how their work is stored and displayed. Pieces must live both on and off the body—in the vitrines, tables, and cases of the gallery, booth, retail shop, or private home. Presentation is crucial to the cycle of sales and promotion. Many artists create elaborate boxes that provide settings for their pieces, enhancing their value to collectors by protecting them or putting them on view when not in use. Techniques of display can also become a mode of commentary. Susan Kingsley's Gold Tooth and Fur Fetish offsets an almost primitive neckpiece against a stand covered with thick black fur, amping up the conventional plushness of standard jewelry shop fittings.

Former gallerist Susan Cummins addressed the idea of display in her 2001 exhibition "Jewelry as an Object of Installation." (A number of artists featured on the following pages participated in that important exhibition.) As jewelry finds a place in museum and gallery exhibitions, artists are conceiving room-size installations that broaden the discourse beyond the scale of the body. This printed exhibition concludes with work by Iris Eichenberg and Ruudt Peters, two Dutch artists who are leading the movement from things to spaces.



LIAUNG-CHUNG YEN
HENRIETTA, NEW YORK
A Big Fish in a Small Pond #2 (ring), 2004
14k gold, pearl
⅞ × 4½ × ⅞ inches
Photo: Dan Neuberger

SUSAN KINGSLEY
CARMEL, CALIFORNIA
Gold Tooth and Fur Fetish, 2002
14k and 24k gold, fur
9 × 9 × 9 inches
Photo: Robert Neimy

ALEXANDER BLANK
MUNICH, GERMANY
What Comes Around Goes Around: Brooches, 2005
found plastic objects, resin, ash sand, silver
dimensions variable
Photo: Alexander Blank

The status of frames and ornament vis á vis works of art was explored by the philosopher Jacques Derrida in his 1987 book *The Truth in Painting*. Derrida, who founded the technique of thinking and criticism known as deconstruction, argued that in the Western tradition, certain forms of artistic expression are considered marginal, serving as secondary supports to a primary work of art. Such supplemental forms include the frame around a picture, the pedestal that supports a statue, and the spacing of letters on a page. Derrida argued that while we may consider such marginal arts secondary and subservient, they are, in fact, necessary to the process of perceiving and understanding the primary work.

By setting off the precious object—a painting, a stone, a woman's face—from the world of ordinary things, the frame confers status and value. Through its design, the frame shapes our perception and understanding of the thing it encloses. Describing this modest yet powerful task, Derrida wrote that the frame "disappears, buries itself, melts away at the moment it deploys its greatest energy. The frame is in no way a background...but neither is its thickness as margin a figure. Or at least it is a figure which comes away of its own accord." In a curious oscillation between figure and ground, form and content, the margin disappears from view as it performs its crucial task of foregrounding—of making present and visible—the framed object. Furthermore, insofar as the work of art depends upon the frame to maintain its separation from the everyday world, the frame reveals a kind of emptiness and dependency at the core of the precious thing. Without its edges, the center cannot hold.

To curate is to determine the display of objects as well as their selection and interpretation. Putting two things side by side is a form of commentary. The space that separates one work from another is also a glue or medium that holds them together. The blank ground of a page or a wall is both a neutral, invisible ether and an opaque substance—thick, sticky, slow—that binds and connects. Curators use labels, lighting, and vitrines to stage the objects on view, just as the jeweler creates a setting for a precious stone that both protects the thing and pushes it up into visibility, showing it off to its best advantage.

Derrida's theory of the frame informs the choice of objects and themes explored in this project. Gathered on the two-sided walls of this 50-page gallery is a collection of works that are each, in themselves, a museum in miniature. The jeweler assembles strange or beautiful objects and transforms them through juxtaposition, presentation, and physical transformation.

The design of jewelry requires exacting attention to modes of connection and manners of framing and display. When do those details overtake the work to create new manners of ornament, or to comment on fetishes of the precious? In my search through the world of the jeweler's art, I looked for places where the act of collecting became as intriguing as the collection itself, and where the act of framing became a critical and interpretive process rather than a passive one, engaging the viewer in a narrative of discovery.

Consider the work of Alexander Blank. His series *What Goes Around Comes Around* gathers together found plastic objects and conceals them inside a dark blanket of resin and ash sand. Does the treasure hidden inside consist of abandoned machine parts (gears, screws, levers) or tawdry bits of ornament (buttons, buckles, flowers)? Such humble artifacts acquire importance not because they have been made visible, but because they are cloaked, obscured, hidden away. They are valuable because unknown, set off from the world inside their gritty coats. These burnt offerings presumably bore no relation to one another in life, but now they are united by a common shroud of blackness.

Blank's project thus contemplates and reverses the traditional functions of jewelry: he has obscured rather than revealed the objects in his collection, and elevated lowly things not by showing us their beauty but by dulling and softening their profiles inside an inky garb. Like letterforms on a page, these dark marks have no inherent meaning, but take on significance as a series.

> The true collector is in the grip not of what is collected but of collecting.... To collect is to rescue things, valuable things, from neglect, from oblivion, or simply from the ignoble destiny of being in someone else's collection rather than one's own.
>
> **SUSAN SONTAG**, quoted in Rigmor Hovland, *Sigurd Bronger* (Oslo: Labratorium Mechanum, 1998).

Found objects and reclaimed materials appear in numerous guises across the field of contemporary jewelry. Are not all gems and minerals found objects at the start? Alexander Blank has chosen to bury his lowly treasures. More commonly, the jeweler celebrates the beauty, specificity, and nostalgic charm of lost-and-found objects. Harriete Estel Berman refashions tin containers into over-sized bracelets and other decorative objects. Her Wrist Corsages replace the natural flowers one might wear to the high school dance with found imagery harvested from the cycle of consumerism. Berman reframes printed matter to give it a new function. The flat surface dominates these three-dimensional objects, which share the graphic designer's pleasure in cropping images.

Blank hides the found object, and Berman celebrates it through artful framing and reuse. Lisa Walker approaches the readymade from a different direction. Confirming the ordinariness of the ordinary thing, she rejects ideas of transformation and mystery, refusing to confer value on the commercial junk she assembles into modern objects of adornment.

Walker also eschews traditional standards of craftsmanship in favor of one of the basest methods of connection: glue. In a necklace of visceral simplicity, freshwater pearls swim in a transparent puddle of glue. The glue is a means of connection and, literally, a medium, a shiny substance through which to view the semiprecious orbs suspended within. The pearls are bubbles of solid matter that animate their liquid setting.

Walker's stark and joyous realism recalls the brightly lit display cases of a boardwalk candy shop. Bits of plastic, wool, wood, and shell are held together in bright clusters; google eyes swarm across a rubber rose. Glue seeps out along points of connection, and paint adds a viscous, physical layer to simple objects of desire. If a secret hides inside visual confections, it is sure to be an easy one, like the prize at the bottom of a cereal box.

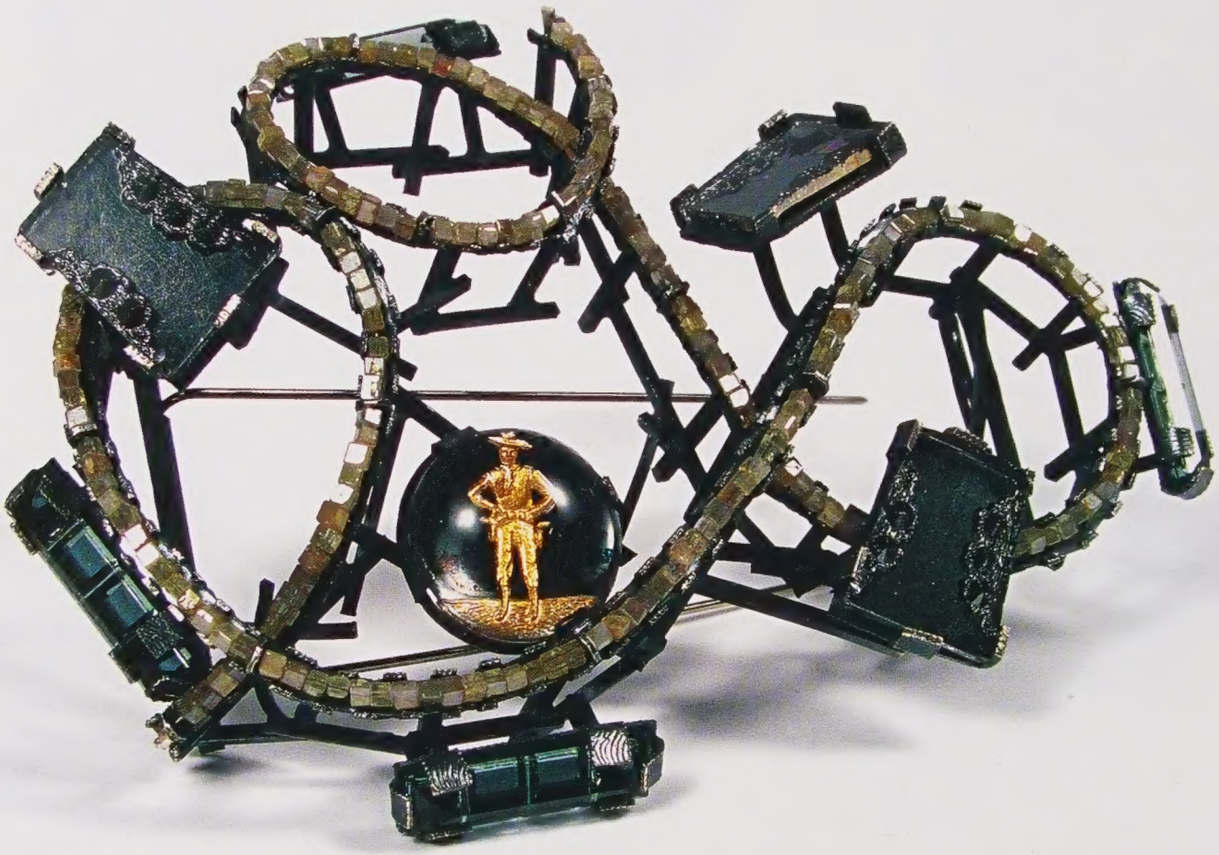
HARRIETE ESTEL BERMAN
SAN MATEO, CALIFORNIA
Ruffles and Wrist Corsages, 1998–99
recycled tin containers, plastic core
dimensions variable
Photo: Philip Cohen

LISA WALKER
MUNICH, GERMANY
Necklace, 2006
freshwater pearls, wool, glue
15¾ × 7/8 inches
Courtesy Jewelerswerk Galerie, Washington, DC
Photo: Lisa Walker

LISA WALKER
MUNICH, GERMANY
Brooches, 2005–2007
various materials (aluminum, cardboard, enamel paint, fabric, freshwater pearls, glue, gold, lacquer, paua shell, plastic, spray paint, rubber, stone, thread, wood, stones, sticky tape)
dimensions variable
Courtesy Jewelerswerk Galerie, Washington, DC
Photo: Lisa Walker

Helen Britton refashions glass ornaments, mostly from postwar European costume jewelry, into elaborately assembled semi-industrial landscapes. A black stag, a golden cowboy, a red nude: these tiny icons salvaged from the storehouse of kitsch come alive in settings that are both raw and luxurious. In each piece a nostalgic image—vivid yet frail—stands against a richly rugged, almost grandiose scene. The stag rushes towards a mountain of rose quartz, while the cowboy is caught in a tangle of train tracks or highway ramps that threaten to engulf him. The curves of the pin-up girl are no match for the corpulent mounds of pearls and coral that proliferate around her. These lavish mineral fruits of the living sea are like candy or caviar.

HELEN BRITTON
MUNICH, GERMANY
Stag Mountain (brooch), 2006
silver, argyle diamonds, glass, paint, quartz, rose quartz
2 × 1¼ × 1 inches
Courtesy Jewelerswerk Galerie, Washington, DC
Photo: Helen Britton



HELEN BRITTON
MUNICH, GERMANY
Last Cowboy (brooch), 2005
silver, glass, diamonds
2⅜ × 2 × 1 inches
Courtesy Jewelerswerk Galerie, Washington, DC
Photo: Helen Britton

Is the stag jumping up the mountain or throwing himself against the rock?

HELEN BRITTON

HELEN BRITTON
MUNICH, GERMANY
Beautiful (brooch) (and detail showing elements before assembly), 2005
silver, broome pearls, glass, coral
2⅓ x 2 x 1½ inches
Courtesy of Jewelerswerk, Washington, DC
Photo: Helen Britton

The charm bracelet, which is experiencing a revival in popular design, is a collection of three-dimensional icons assembled over time by the individual wearer. This popular archetype is finding its way into contemporary jewelry, as numerous artists create pieces that use sequences of objects to suggest real or invented histories. Each piece functions as a miniature museum assembled on a string, where the sum is greater than the parts. The objects can be natural or artificial, abstract or representational.

Jill Schwartz pieces together odd bits of antique costume ornament into satisfying arrangements. In one bracelet she frames old buttons as if they were tiny works of art; in another, she brings together mismatched baubles with the common theme of circularity and enclosure. While the classic charm bracelet emphasizes the dangling pendant, Schwartz also collects and assembles horizontal chains and bands in diverse materials and colors, creating sequences that read in multiple directions.

Lynda Watson uses watch crystals as tiny picture frames. In the piece shown here, the crystals serve to preserve and present pencil drawings from a trip to Baja, personalized memories that exist alongside shells gathered on the beach. Louise McLure creates denser, more arcane narratives, where a profusion of materials jostle against each other. She uses scrapbooking techniques, including the faux aging of paper, to create gently cluttered chains of association.

JILL SCHWARTZ
GREAT BARRINGTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Bracelets (three), 2006
freshwater pearls, mother of pearl buttons, cone checkered buttons, bone, glass buttons
dimensions variable
Photo: Patrick Dean

LYNDA WATSON
SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA
Baja with The Guys (bracelet), 2001
fine and sterling silver, pencil drawings under watch crystals, shells collected in Baja
diameter 7 inches
Photo: Hap Sakwa

LOUISE MCLURE
SALUDA, NORTH CAROLINA
Whose Words Were Writ In Water (bracelet), 2006
glass, silver, pearls, moonstone, mother of pearl, colored Venetian glass, heat-formed plastic
7½ x 1¼ inches
Photo: Hap Sakwa

Lauren Schlossberg assembles chunky, overscaled ornaments into jewelry pieces that break with the preciousness and nostalgia of the charm tradition. Likewise, Sam Shaw collects pieces of stone and gives them a sense of sculptural mass as well as implied symbolic meaning. His *Shaman's Tool Box* encircles orbs and slices of natural stone inside thin rims of gold, turning mineral artifacts into esoteric icons.

The miniature museums of Bruce Metcalf juxtapose nature and artifice, abstraction and depiction, found objects and handcrafted fabrications. A *Star Wars* action figure helmet shares pride of place with a glass eye, a seedpod, a machine part, and elements carved from wood. Each one occupies its own space, asserting its individual presence.

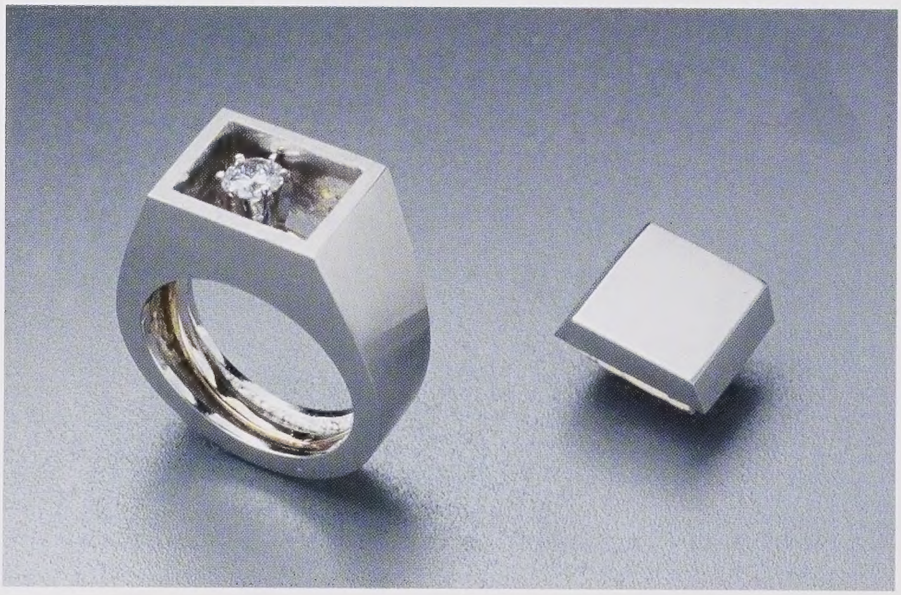
LAUREN SCHLOSSBERG
LUTHERVILLE, MARYLAND
Blue Flower (charm bracelet), 2007
antique and modern glass seed beads, Italian mosaic glass, antique buttons, sterling silver, pigmented epoxy resin
7½ × 1 × ½ inches
Photo: Lauren Schlossberg

SAM SHAW
NORTHEAST HARBOR, MAINE
Shamans Tool Box, 2006
18k gold with gemstones (aquamarines, tourmalines, pearls, opals, quartzes, fossils, staurolite, lapis, moonstones, pyrite, rhodochrosite)
20 × 1 inches
Photo: Robert Diamante

BRUCE METCALF
BALA CYNWYD, PENNSYLVANIA
Rhyme and Pun Necklace 4, 2005
carved, gold-leafed, or painted wood, 24k gold plated brass, copper electroform, iron wire, stainless-steel cable, weed-whacker string, Star Wars action figure helmet, foam ball, cork, glass eye, resin, HO-scale rowboat, sweetgum seed pod, pepper-grinder mechanism, bass lure
13 × 12 inches
Courtesy Charon Kransen Arts, New York
Photo: Bruce Metcalf

SEUNG-HEA LEE
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND
Seasons in Vases, 2001
silver, 18k, coral, peridot
1 × 1½; 1 × 1¼; 1 × 1¼ inches
Photo: Mark Johnston

SILKE SPITZER
BERLIN, GERMANY
Bumpy Rings, 2001, and
Ringinaring, 2002
925 silver, 750 gold, raw diamonds
dimensions variable
Courtesy Ornamentum Gallery, Hudson, New York. Photo: Petra Jascke



SONDRA SHERMAN
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
Hidden Agender ring (open), 1999
14k white gold, 18k yellow gold, cubic zirconia
1¼ × 1 × ½ inches
Collection of Kenneth Trapp
Photo: Marty Doyle

TODD REED
BOULDER, COLORADO
Ring, 2006
18k yellow gold, raw diamond cubes,
princess cut diamonds
center cluster, ¾ inches
Courtesy De Novo Gallery, Palo Alto, California
Photo: Azad Photography

A frame is a container, a vessel that shapes and presents a body of form or content. A vase is another kind of frame—a boundary that holds forth a decorative harvest—and it is an apt analogue for the jeweler's setting. Seung-Hea Lee's *Seasons in Vases* is a series of rings whose settings hold together jubilant blooms of coral, metal, and stone. Each silver "vase" also encloses a ring of gold, creating another layer of framing.

In Silke Spitzer's *Ringinaring*, one ring encloses another. The inner ring pushes from the inside out, forming (and deforming) the outer shape. Her *Bumpy Rings* consist of two raw diamonds hidden between layers of silver and gold. The diamonds reveal themselves only by pushing against the exterior surface.

In Todd Reed's work, thick, gold frames enclose princess-cut diamonds. The frames take over, dominate, even as they protect, and make visible their glittering quarry. The setting assumes full control in Sondra Sherman's *Hidden Agender*, a sleek masculine ring that enshrouds a conventional gold lady's ring crowned with a synthetic diamond.

Constanze Schreiber avoids precious materials altogether in *Deadheads*, a series of rings that plays with the production process to create a new relationship between setting and gem, image and frame. The copper setting is a vessel for the colored plastic that overflows its borders. Traditionally, the frame is a form of control, a means of containment, but here it becomes open and incomplete.

CONSTANZE SCHREIBER
AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS
Deadheads (rings), 2004
plastic, copper
2⅝ x 2⅝ x ⅝ inches
Photo: Edo Kuipers

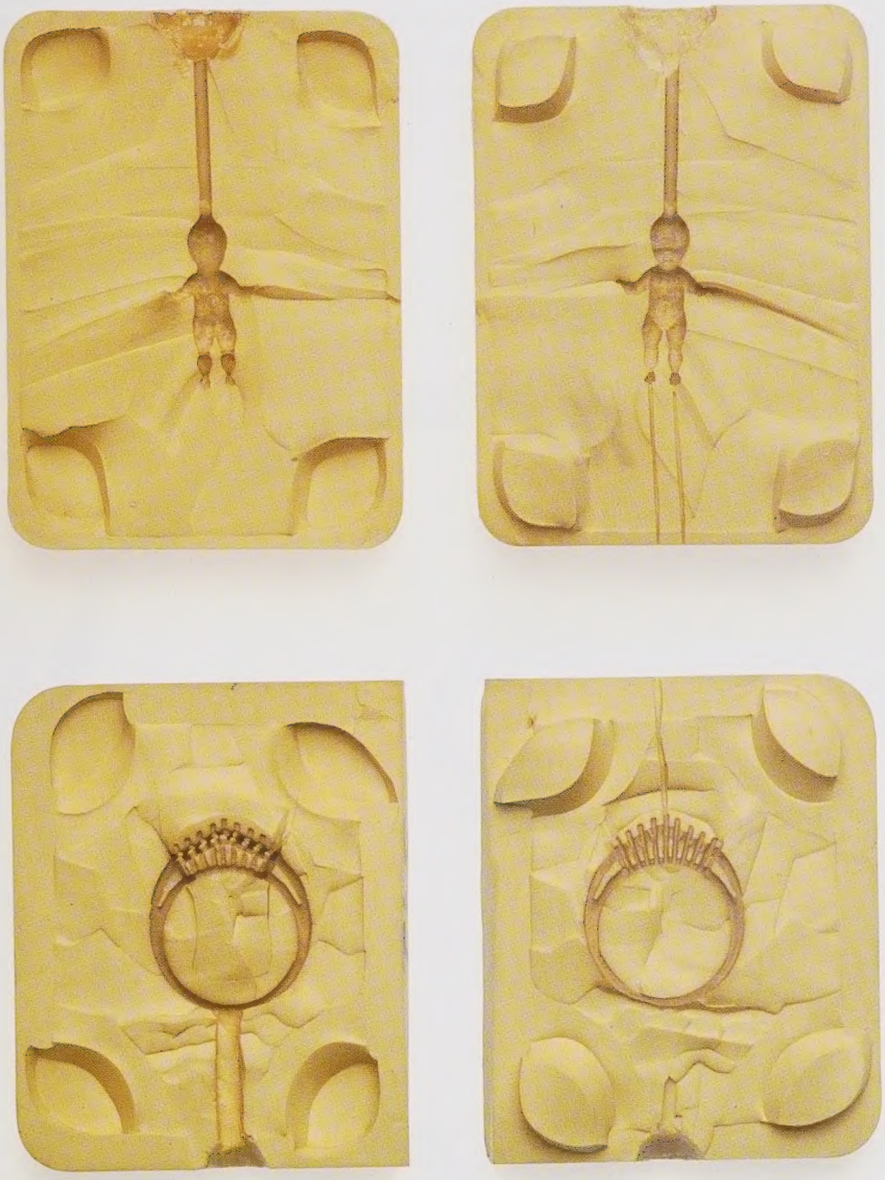
Deganit Stern Schocken looks at the transformation of materials from solid to liquid and back. Her project *How Many is One*, exhibited at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art in 2003, is a detailed study of the industrial production of jewelry. Schocken engages the readymade from yet another direction, employing molds intended for the mass production of jewelry components to create one-of-a-kind pieces. Rather than use the molds to construct perfectly uniform objects, Schocken invites error and accident into her process.

A mold is a special kind of frame or vessel. It is the perfect outside for the manufactured thing, an inverted double that imposes its interior void on the form it reproduces. Yet in addition to giving the object its desirable features, the mold by necessity leaves behind artifacts of making that the craftsperson works to erase, from the seams that show where the two sides of the mold had come together to the duct through which molten material had once been poured.

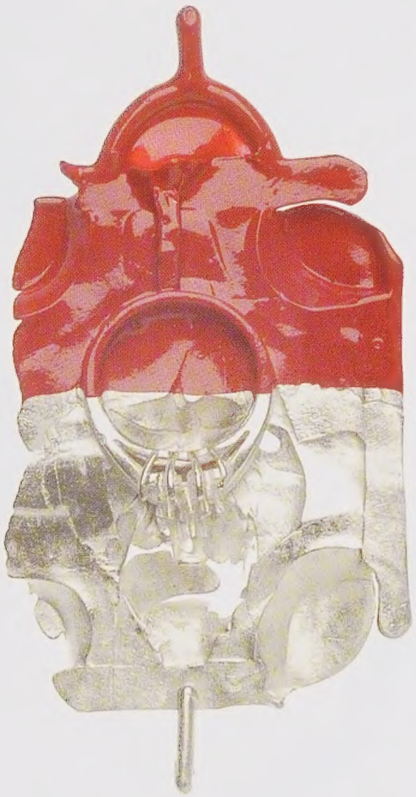
This duct, called the anguss, is like an umbilical cord that feeds the void with casting material. In the lost wax process, which Schocken employs, a model is made as wax flows through the anguss to fill a rubber mold. (This wax object is later melted away in the final casting process.) If the two sides of the mold are not connected tightly enough, the wax escapes, leaving a margin around the cast figure. Schocken's pieces preserve that margin as well as keep intact the umbilical form left by the anguss.

Further embellished with paint and stones, the resulting objects have the ancient character of fossils or archaeological fragments. In one piece, a conventional ring is framed against a misshapen field, indented in its corners where the male and female parts of the mold had locked together. Form emerges against formlessness. The precise, delicate figure of the ring takes shape against a puddle of spilled matter. Three-dimensional structure appears against a thin, flat margin of excess material.

DEGANIT STERN SCHOCKEN
HERZELIA, ISRAEL
How Many Is One: Anomalies
silver, stones
2 × 2 inches
Photo: Uri Gershuni and David Adika



DEGANIT STERN SCHOCKEN
HERZELIA, ISRAEL
Molds
rubber
2 3/8 × 1 inches
Photo: Uri Gershuni and David Adika



DEGANIT STERN SCHOCKEN
HERZELIA, ISRAEL
How Many Is One: Anomalies
silver, industrial paint
2 × 1 inches
Photo: Uri Gershuni and David Adika

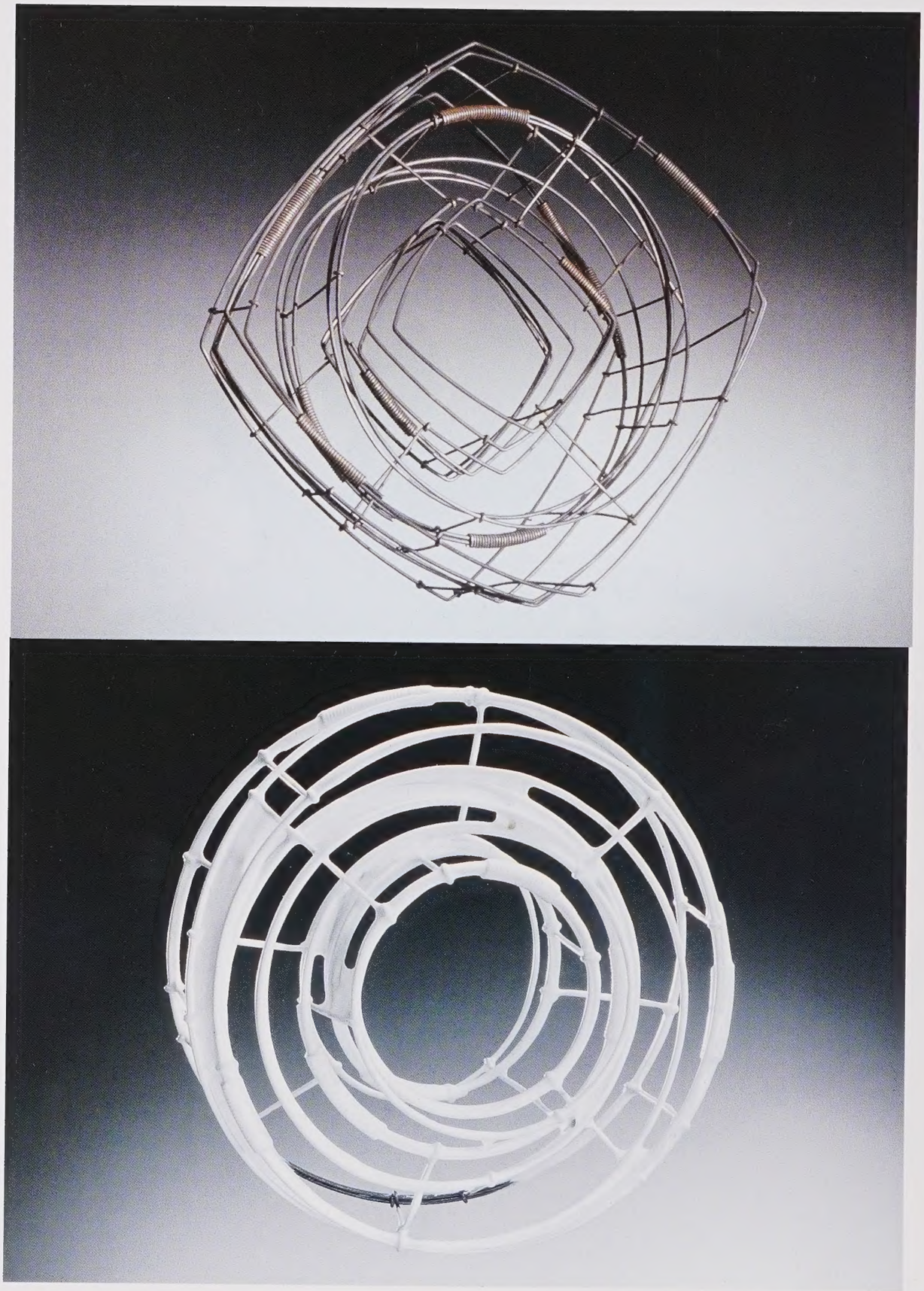
The connecting elements in a necklace or a pair of earrings, whether handcrafted or industrially produced, determine the routine functionality of the piece. Annoying, indeed, is the necklace whose clasp is heavier than its chain or pendant, causing the humble closure to migrate unbidden from the back to the front.

Silke Spitzer, who enjoys inverting the value of functions and materials, has made *Treechain* out of iron and gold. A series of twigs, each cast in iron from a unique length of natural wood, are linked together with circles of gold. The precious material plays a supporting role.

Iron also figures in the work of Vera Siemund, who cuts sheets of metal into decorative shapes whose classical intricacy contradicts the dusky harshness of this industrial material. Siemund also plays graphic shape and pattern against sculptural depth and mechanical ingenuity. In one brooch, flat layers of sawed iron overlap in a shallow space. The rivets that hold the planes together allow them to move and rotate, like the limbs of a paper puppet. The connections among the elements transform the function of the piece.

SILKE SPITZER
BERLIN, GERMANY
Treechain, 2002
cast iron, 750 gold
Courtesy Ornamentum Gallery, Hudson, New York
Photo: Petra Jascke

VERA SIEMUND
HAMBURG, GERMANY
Brooch, 2005
sawn iron, movable
height 4¼ inches
Photo: Vera Siemund



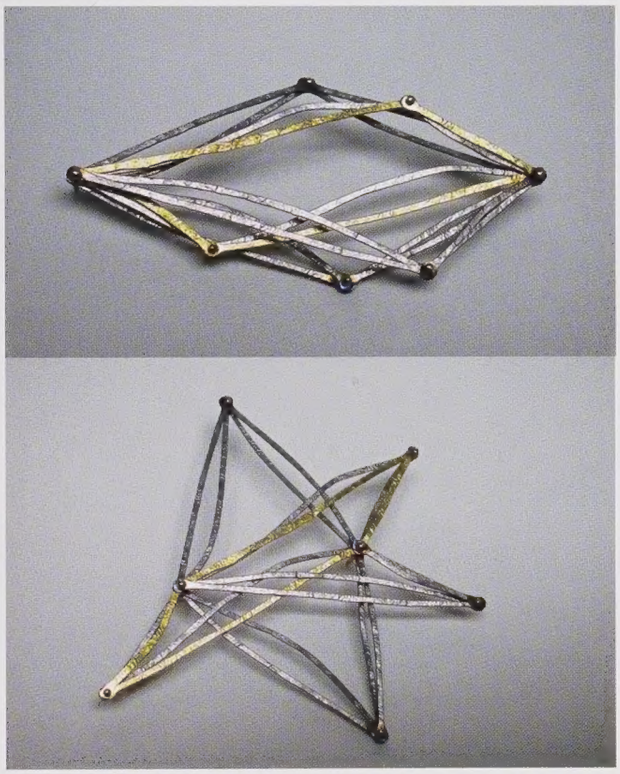
DONNA D'AQUINO
MT. RAINIER, MARYLAND
Wire Bracelet # 93, 2004
steel
6¾ × 6 × 4½ inches
Photo: Ralph Gabriner

DONNA D'AQUINO
MT. RAINIER, MARYLAND
Wire Bracelet #91, 2004
plastic-dipped steel
6 × 6 × 3½ inches
Photo: Ralph Gabriner

Movement is crucial to the life of jewelry: earrings dangle, necklaces swing, and bracelets and bangles rattle against each other. Kristine Bolhuis assembles her earrings, bracelets, and brooches like tiny machines, allowing the wearer to manipulate the elements into new configurations. The graphic lines defining these pieces are malleable and dynamic, not fixed, connected by active nodes.

Donna D'Aquino constructs bracelets out of steel wire. Although the springs she uses imply mechanical movement, they serve instead as connectors that hold together lengths of material. Dipping some pieces in plastic, D'Aquino softens the connections while introducing elements of chance and organic form. Her work is architectonic and anti-pictorial, exploring jewelry in three dimensions.

KRISTINE BOLHUIS
FERNDALE, MICHIGAN
Expansion (earrings), 2005
sterling silver
length 3 inches (extended)
Courtesy Sienna Gallery, Lenox, Massachusetts
Photo: Kristine Bolhuis



KRISTINE BOLHUIS
FERNDALE, MICHIGAN
Stellate Rectangle (brooch), 2006
18k gold, titanium
length 4 inches (extended)
Courtesy Sienna Gallery, Lenox, Massachusetts
Photo: Kristine Bolhuis

KRISTINE BOLHUIS
FERNDALE, MICHIGAN
Carapace (bracelet), 2006
sterling silver
3 × 4 inches
Courtesy Sienna Gallery, Lenox, Massachusetts
Photo: Kristine Bolhuis

Jewelry is sculpture scaled to the human body. It is also a mode of painting whose tradition encompasses the locket, the cameo, and other spectacular acts of miniaturism. The Victorians preserved strands of hair inside hinged lockets and painted portraits with pigment made from a loved one's ground hair.

The pendants of Nicola Scholz reference this painterly tradition, while pushing the classical frame just off center. Her pendants encircle odd scraps of decorative fabric, embroidered with human hair. In contrast with the lover's curl preserved in a sentimental locket, Scholz's stitches suggest damage and repair rather than love eternal.

Melanie Bilenker crafts tiny images that depict mundane, ordinary moments. Her *Arms* brooch mirrors the body's symmetry with twin frames chained together. *A Day for a Bath* encloses a strangely empty drawing of the corner of a room inside a simple gold frame. The frame unscrews to allow a second, more intimate drawing to slide out. The mechanical features of Bilenker's pieces (chains, sliding planes) recall the gadgetry of the classic Victorian locket. The simple line drawings, made from strands of hair laid into resin over an ivory ground, replace vivid detail with a schematic armature.

Having put him to sleep on her lap, Delilah called a man to shave off the seven braids of his hair, and so began to subdue him. And his strength left him.

Audiotext from the exhibition "Tatort-Tatwort," Galerie Marzee, Nijmegen, 2005

NICOLA SCHOLZ
MUNICH, GERMANY
Untitled (pendants), 2005
gold, silver, polyester, human hair
1½ × 2 inches
Photos: Nicola Scholz

MELANIE BILENKER
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA
Arms (brooch), 2005
silver, gold, piano key ivory, ebony, resin, hair
2 × 1⅜ × ¼ inches
Courtesy Sienna Gallery, Lenox, Massachusetts
Photo: Ken Yanoviak

MELANIE BILENKER
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA
A Day for a Bath (brooch), 2005
gold, piano key ivory, resin, hair
1 1/16 × ⅞ × ½ inches
Courtesy Sienna Gallery, Lenox, Massachusetts
Photo: Kevin Sprague

HARRIETE ESTEL BERMAN
SAN MATEO, CALIFORNIA
Bronze Identity Bead Necklace, 2001
post consumer recycled tin cans, Plexiglas, brass tubing, polymer clay, colored electrical wire cords; sterling silver, 10k gold rivets
diameter beads: 1 – 1⅝ inches
Photo: Philip Cohen

If the history of art favors rectilinear frames, the jewelry tradition has favored circles and ovals. Watch crystals, lockets, and cameos often have rounded faces. The circle is intimate and anthropomorphic; it also zeros in on its subject rather than opening up to a broad vista. As a curator of found imagery, the jewelry artist clips out pieces of printed matter—photographs, zoological prints, scraps of advertising and packaging—and reframes them, cropping off the surrounding ground to bring the viewer in close to a precisely edited icon.

The craft of the jeweler resembles that of the maker of optical instruments, a fact not lost on artists including Kiff Slemmons, Harriete Estel Berman, and Roberta and David Williamson, who use round lenses of glass or Plexiglas to hone our vision on alluring graphic images. Slemmons takes us on a circular journey reminiscent of nineteenth-century optical experiments, while the Williamsons compose miniature museums of natural history under glass. Berman finds alluring ephemera in the everyday detritus of barcodes and brand names, making them precious and abstract by sealing them in a Plexi carapace.

KIFF SLEMMONS
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
Eclipse, 2000
silver, brass, mica photographs, ebony
8 inches diameter
Photo: Rod Slemmons

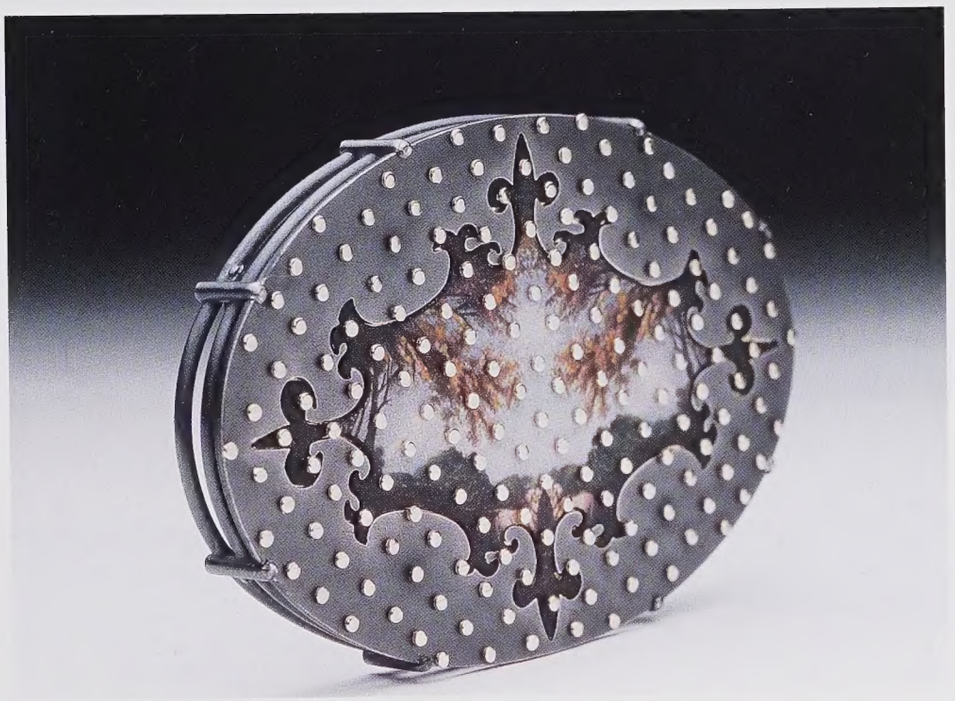
ROBERTA AND DAVID WILLIAMSON
BEREA, OHIO
Nurture (brooch), 2006
sterling silver, quartz crystal, paper, acrylic paint, lacquer, resin, antique ironstone platter, leaves
2 × 2 × ½ inches
Photo: Jerry Anthony

ROBERTA AND DAVID WILLIAMSON
BEREA, OHIO
Oh What Lovely Birds, 2006
sterling silver, quartz crystal, antique prints, paper
20 × 1 × ¼ inches
Photo: James Beards

If the frame protects and makes visible the work of art, it also serves to imprison it, cutting it off from the outside world. Diane Falkenhagen constructs frames for manipulated photographic images, often taken from art history, that obscure as well as reveal the alluring picture inside. In Io, decorative scrollwork is a barrier that invites us to peer inside and discover a secret life. *Rococo Landscape* employs points of connection as sites of dominance and control. Here, a fragment of a Fragonard painting is sandwiched between layers of silver locked together with gold rivets. The landscape remains visible through its excessive, overbearing frame, entreating the viewer to discover the idealized, unattainable world captured within.

DIANE FALKENHAGEN
GALVESTON, TEXAS
Io (brooch), 2000
mixed media image on polymer clay,
24k gold plate on silver, sterling silver
with patina
4 × 1 × 3/8 inches
Photo: Bill Pogue

DIANE FALKENHAGEN
GALVESTON, TEXAS
Turning Leaf (brooch), 2000
sterling silver, mixed media image
on polymer clay
6 × 7/8 × 3/16 inches
Photo: Bill Pogue



DIANE FALKENHAGEN
GALVESTON, TEXAS
Rococo Landscape (brooch, front and back), 2006
sterling silver, mixed media image on sterling silver, 14k gold
2¼ × 3⅝ × ⅜ inches
Photo: Bill Pogue

KAREN PONTOPPIDAN
MUNICH, GERMANY
Brooch, 2006
silver, niello
2 × 1½ × ½ inches
Photo: Karen Pontoppidan

KAREN PONTOPPIDAN
MUNICH, GERMANY
Rings, 2006
silver, gold, enamel, niello
dimensions variable
Photo: Karen Pontoppidan

When is the back as important as the front? When does the hidden interior become as significant as the outer surface? Works by contemporary jewelry artists address these questions by focusing thought and detail on the side of a piece that faces the wearer rather than the world.

The back of a brooch is its functional plane. The pin backs of Karen Pontoppidan go beyond the standard demands of closure and support to become elaborate linear compositions in their own right. In one brooch, the metal back takes the form of a sailing boat. Bits of metal scaffolding peek out from behind, hinting their presence to the public sphere.

Pontoppidan's rings present an image or picture on one side, and a physically worked surface on the other. She writes, "Sometimes I use the back to bring value to a piece, to show my love and care for the story told on the front. Other times I use the backside to show my ambiguity towards the front. The beautiful front contrasts with a rough, dark backside."

A bracelet by Sharon Portelance created as a memorial "wreath," spills over with ecstatic form on the outside, while the inner surface bears a carefully constructed, tightly contained text. Writhing chains of silver and gold and deformed planes of perforated metal accumulate on the outside, allowing solemnly rendered lettering to hold together the interior.

SHARON PORTELANCE
SOUTH PORTLAND, MAINE
Wreath for Maeve and Liam (bracelet)
2004–2006
sterling silver, 22k gold
6 × 6 × 2¼ inches
Photo: Robert Diamante

SONDRA SHERMAN
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
Study for Alice II (pendant, front and back), 1999
18k sterling, leaf, chandelier crystal
2 × 1 3/8 × 1/4 inches
Photo: Marty Doyle

SONDRA SHERMAN
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
White Wing Planished Drop (pendant, front and back), 2005
sterling silver, 18k gold, yellow cubic zirconia
4 × 2 × 5/8 inches
Courtesy Sienna Gallery, Lenox, Massachusetts
Photo: Marty Doyle

Sondra Sherman's *Study for Alice II* pendant encloses a delicately unfurled natural leaf inside a heavy silver rim. The frame is built around a hand-cut antique chandelier crystal, whose edge consists of one continuous bevel. The flat back of the pendant is cut through to reveal a glimpse of the fragile botanical specimen that is contained and protected within. Sherman's *White Wing Planished Drop* pendant is unembellished on the front, yet richly incised on the back with an image of a bird wing. Sherman explains, "This symbol on the back is reserved for the wearer to know about and contemplate. It is private."

Bettina Speckner also pursues a painter's sensibility at the scale of the brooch, using photographs and photo etching techniques to create intimate pictorial works. One piece features a solemn portrait from perhaps the late nineteenth century, criss-crossed with lines of pearls and semiprecious stone. Rather than frame the portrait neatly around its edge, these elements emanate from the interior of the picture, creating an border that is drawn from the inside out. The back of the piece explodes with intensity, belying the girl's quiet exterior.

BETTINA SPECKNER
UBERSEE, GERMANY
Brooch (front), 2006
ferrotype, silver, jasper, pearls, tourmaline
2 × 3 × 1/8 inches
Courtesy Sienna Gallery, Lenox, Massachusetts
Photo: Kevin Sprague

[The frame] disappears, buries itself, melts away at the moment it deploys its greatest energy. The frame is in no way a background...but neither is its thickness as margin a figure. Or at least it is a figure which comes away of its own accord. **JACQUES DERRIDA**, *The Truth in Painting*

BETTINA SPECKNER
UBERSEE, GERMAN
Brooch (back), 2006
ferrotype, silver, jasper, pearls, tourmaline
2 × 3 × 1/8 inches
Courtesy Sienna Gallery, Lenox, Massachusetts
Photo: Kevin Sprague

Open shapes that frame nothing recur in the work of Tarja Tuupanen. She carves stone into thin forms resembling objects that are found in nature yet are wholly constructed. These lips, rims, or portals onto an absent place are supported on minimal silver settings.

TARJA TUUPANEN
LAPPEENRANTA, FINLAND
Brooch, 2006
white quartz, silver
approx. 2½ × 1¼ inches
Photo: Kimmo Heikkilä

TARJA TUUPANEN
LAPPEENRANTA, FINLAND
Brooch, 2006
onyx, rubber, silver
approx. 2⅜ × ¾ inches
Photo: Jaan Seitsara

TARJA TUUPANEN
LAPPEENRANTA, FINLAND
Brooch, 2006
white quartz, silver
approx. 2½ × 1½ × ⅜ inches
Photo: Jaan Seitsara

VICTORIA LANSFORD
ATLANTA, GEORGIA
Amour (amulet on a loop-in-loop chain), 2004
18k and 22k gold, sterling silver, fine silver, holly blue agate, titanium bonded chalcedony drusy
amulet 3½ × 1¼ × ½ inches
Photo: Victoria Lansford

VICTORIA LANSFORD
ATLANTA, GEORGIA
Echo Knowledge (pin/pendant), 1997
sterling silver, fine silver, 18k gold
2½ × 1¾ × ¾ inches
Photo: Victoria Lansford

Victoria Lansford creates miniature works of architecture with functioning windows and doors. The golden gates of her *Echo Knowledge* pin/pendant swing open to reveal a tiny library. The piece is inspired by Umberto Eco's novel *The Name of the Rose*, a tale of late medieval intrigue that centers around a monastic library. Lansford's piece comments on the library as a place where knowledge can be both preserved and locked away: she explains, "The semi-transparent doors represent the history of suppression and simultaneous preservation of art and writing." The shapes used in her *Amour* amulet are modeled after the Chandela temples of Khajuraho in central India; the door opens to expose the filigree form of a praying figure.

Such pieces recall the tradition of the locket, which fetishizes the mechanical aspect of jewelry and encloses an image known only to the wearer. That image might be photographic—an indexical reflection of a loved one's face—or metonymic, made from the beloved's hair. Works by Barb Smith and Vera Siemund look back on the prototype of the locket from a contemporary point of view, creating enclosures and grille works for fragments of history—real, missing, or imagined.

The obsessively detailed pendants of Keith Lo Bue revel in the mechanical possibilities of the jeweler's art. His gem-encrusted piece *Invocation to Sleep* opens up to reveal layers of hidden spaces, ingeniously assembled out of tiny instrument parts, from an 18th-century watch-winding key to a bronze pastry-cutter wheel. Populating this invented history are faces clipped from antique ephemera.

KEITH LO BUE
SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA
Invocation to Sleep (pendant), 2006
enameled sterling silver ladies' compact case, Georgian drawer-pull rosette, lenses, nickel silver fork, musket ball, silver and mother-of-pearl cuff-link, 18th-century watch-winding key, steel, mahogany, optometrist's test lens, drafting tool screw, Czech crystal, 17th- and 19th-century papers, 18th-century pocket watch balance cock, brass, screws, New Zealand paua shell, rubber, sterling silver, 18th-century bronze pastry cutter wheel, steel-point engravings, soil
2⅝ × 2¼ × 1 inches (closed)
Photo: Keith Lo Bue

DIANE FALKENHAGEN
GALVESTON, TEXAS
Man in a Red Turban (fabricated brooch), 2001
24k gold plate on copper, mixed media image on polymer clay
3½ × 3½ × ⅜ inches
Photo: Chris Arend

BARB SMITH
LAFAYETTE, INDIANA
Untitled (silver locket with grandma's dried flower), 2004
sterling silver, hair, watch crystal, flower
14 × 5 × 1 inches
Photo: Barb Smith

BARB SMITH
LAFAYETTE, INDIANA
Untitled (silver locket with a grandfather's fishing hook), 2004
sterling silver, steel, hair, watch crystal
14 × 1 ½ × 1 inches
Photo: Barb Smith

VERA SIEMUND
HAMBURG, GERMANY
Neckpiece, 2004
copper, enamel, silver
diameter 13 inches
Photo: Vera Siemund

The notion of saving a lover's lock inside a chamber of gold or silver is a secular reminiscence of the reliquary, believed by the faithful to preserve bits of a saint's remains. Angela Gleason plays against this mystical concept in her rosaries, *Clean Girl* and *Dirty Girl*, which replace the priestly secrecy of the reliquary with a brash and open materiality. Gleason's plastic vials of detergent and dirt substitute religious notions of virtue and sin with references to the ordinary lives of modern women.

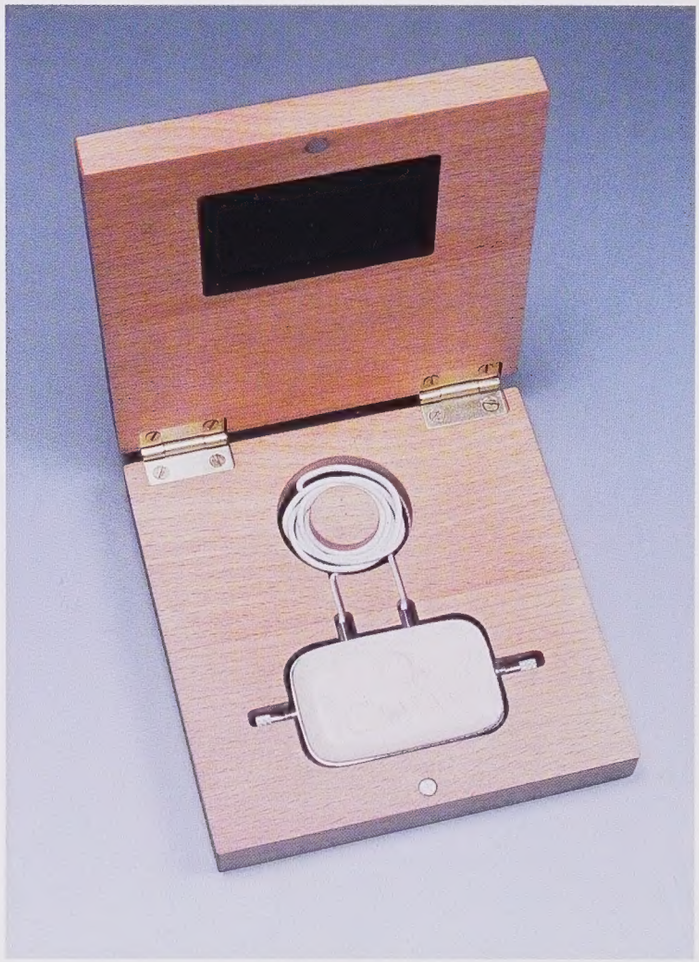
Working in a less literal register, Angela Bubash constructs jewelry pieces that present intriguing materials as elements that are at once sacred and scientific. The display stand for her *Kinetic Earrings* resembles a physics demonstration in a science museum. The colorful specimens of lapis lazuli and dyed feathers preserved in her *Curio* bracelet are placed under glass, serving to both protect the materials and enhance their status and visual brilliance.

ANGELA GLEASON
SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA
Clean Girl (Rosary for The Virgin Mary) (necklace), 2003
plastic, detergent, silver, aluminum
60 × 3 inches
Photo: r. r. jones

ANGELA GLEASON
SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA
Dirty Girl (Rosary for Mary Magdalene) (necklace), 2003
plastic, copper, aluminum, blush, dirt from The Devil's Garden, Ghost Ranch, Oklahoma, and Chimayo
60 × 3 inches
Photo: r. r. jones

ANGELA BUBASH
PENLAND, NORTH CAROLINA
Kinetic Earrings #2, 2006
sterling silver, 18k gold, brass, nickel,
glass, lapis lazuli
earrings 2 × 1 × 1 inches
Courtesy Penland Gallery, Penland, North Carolina
Photo: Tom Mills

ANGELA BUBASH
PENLAND, NORTH CAROLINA
Curio (bracelet), 2006
sterling silver, glass, garnet, dyed feathers
7 × 1 ½ × ½ inches
Courtesy Quirk, Richmond, Virginia
Photo: Tom Mills



SIGURD BRONGER
OSLO, NORWAY
Camay (necklace), 2005
soap, chrome plated silver, cotton cord
2 × 1 inches
Photo: Sigurd Bronger

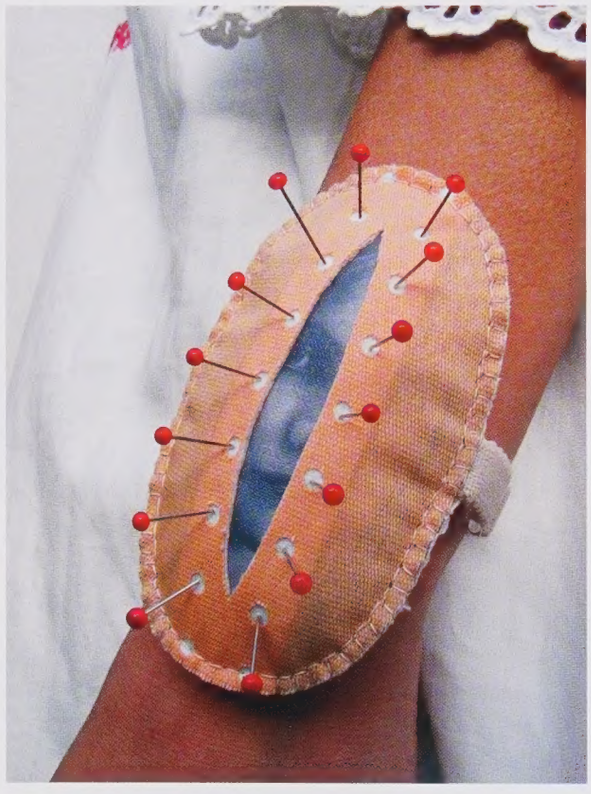
Jewelry is an element of daily ritual. Contemporary jewelry art enacts and envisions rites of love, remembrance, mourning, and worship. A number of artists address the daily care of the self through objects that suggest ongoing activities and processes as well as finished works.

In several pieces by Sigurd Bronger, soap is the "jewel" at the center of chromed mechanical settings. Cool and scientific in tone, these pieces engage the physicality of soap as a material that is at once industrial and organic, pungent, and clean. His *Camay* necklace plays with the product's reference to ivory-carved cameos. Chrome-plated adjustable pins clamp the bar of soap in place, inviting the user to replace it or tighten the pins as needed over time. *Camay*'s custom-made box further underscores the feeling of precision instruments.

Equipped with sewing supplies crafted in gold and silver, Esther Knobel's *Kit for Mending Thoughts* suggests care of the mind rather than the body. The metal box provides a protective case as well as an opportunity for viewing and display. Knobel presents making as a form of thought and introspection.

ESTHER KNOBEL
JERUSALEM, ISRAEL
Kit for Mending Thoughts, 2005
24k and 18k gold, silver, mixed media
7 × 3 × 1 inches
Courtesy Rotasa Collection
Photo: Kevin Sprague

Maria Nuutinen also incorporates tools for making in pieces that address bodily care and ritual. Imprinted with photographic images, her strange pincushion armbands leave behind traditional jewelry materials in favor of the soft fiber arts. They evoke wounds and bandages as well as voodoo rites, acupuncture, and even self-cutting. Nuutinen's pieces speak of cleansing and renewal, danger and pain. The red-tipped pins draw drops of blood to the mind, while the soft padded forms are surrogates for human flesh and the rigors it longs to endure.



MARIA NUUTINEN
LAPPEENRANTA, FINLAND
The Best Days of My Life (pincushions), 2005
cotton wool, elastic band, fabric, pins, plaster, plastic, printed fabric
dimensions variable
Photo: Maria Nuutinen

MARILYN DA SILVA
PINOLE, CALIFORNIA
Second Nature: Home (Lanceolate Honey-eaters)
(2 removable brooches), 2004
copper, sterling silver, gesso, colored pencil, printer's ink, magnets
12 × 12 × ¾ inches
Photo: M. Lee Fatherree

KIFF SLEMMONS
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
Metabox, 1996
silver, ebony, ruler, pencil
closed box 1½ × 3¾ × 1½ inches
Photo: Rod Slemmons

ROBERTA AND DAVID WILLIAMSON
BEREA, OHIO
Insect Collection (brooches and box), 2004
sterling silver, antique prints, rutilated quartz, tin, obsidian, citrine, watchmaker's crystal, pinback button, wood, papier maché, vintage French insect specimen box
brooches 4 × 1 × ½ inches
Photo: James Beards

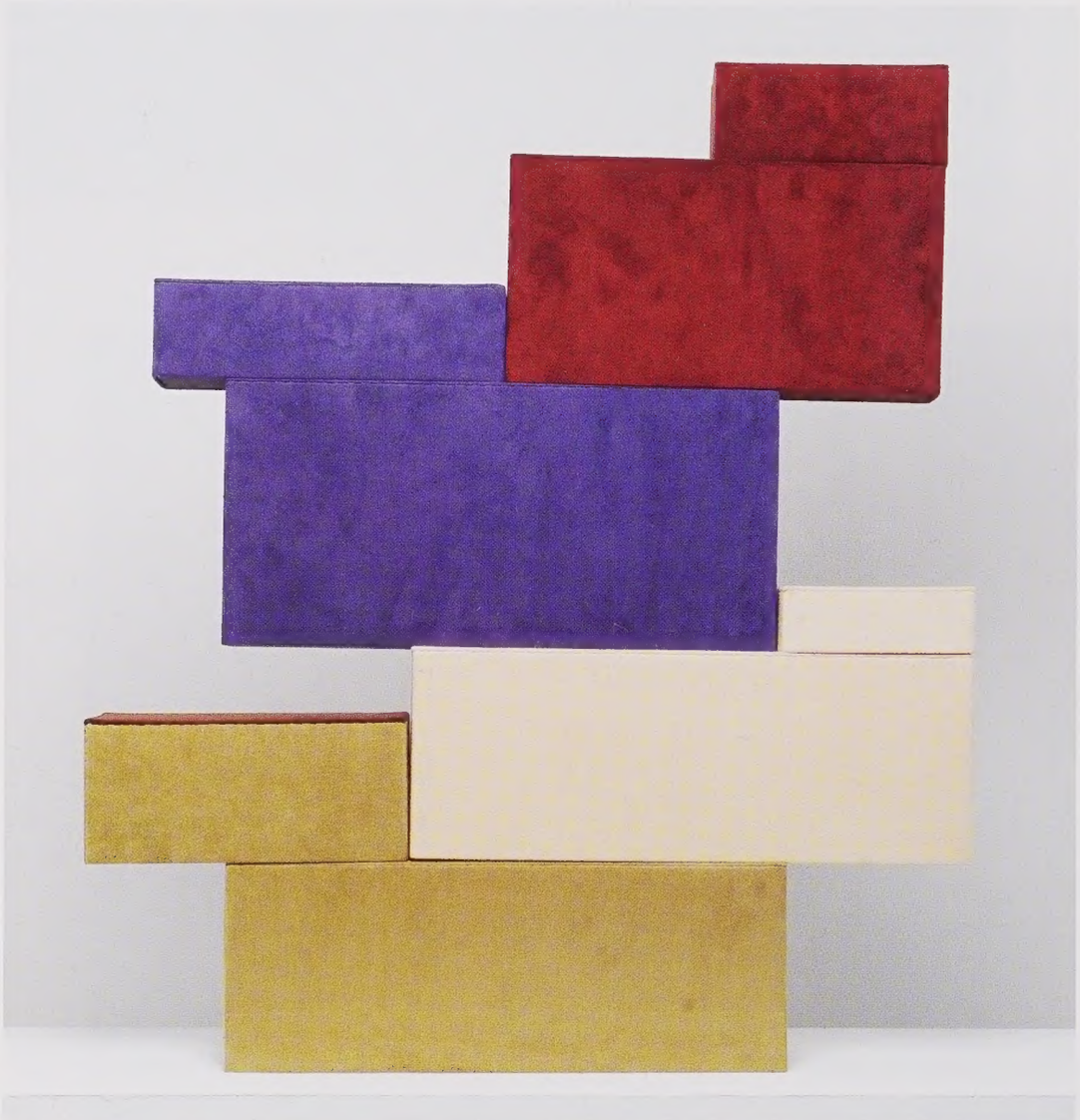
Jewelers are object-makers, and those artifacts live on the human body. They also live in galleries, retail spaces, craft shows, and collectors' homes. Artists create environments for their pieces that become works of art in their own right. The bird brooches of Marilyn da Silva, for example, perch in etched copper nesting grounds that provide them with a second home.

The cabinets of curiosity assembled by collectors beginning in the Renaissance were odd assortments of art works, natural history specimens, and mechanical novelties. Joseph Cornell and other artists referenced that tradition in the twentieth century by assembling found and constructed objects into fantastic miniature tableaux. Marcel Duchamp's *Green Box* (1934) and other works also embedded themes of storage and miniaturization in the modernist discourse.

The thematic of the boxed museum has endless repercussions in the jewelry world. Kiff Slemmons, Linda Kaye-Moses, and Roberta and David Williamson insert works of wearable jewelry into environments reminiscent of Cornell's legendary boxes. Such settings respond to the obvious practical need to effectively store small, valuable art objects while enhancing the artistic significance and physical presence of the pieces.

LINDA KAYE-MOSES
PITTSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS
Drew Her to Their Mysteries (neckpiece, two rings, manuscript with prose poem), 2004
sterling and fine silver, 14k gold, boulder opal, trilobite, found objects (neckpiece and rings): found objects, fine silver, mica schist, cork, paper (nesting case)
neckpiece 4½ × 1½ × ¾ inches; nesting case 8¼ × 5 × 4⅜ inches
Photo: Evan Soldinger

The modern jewel box need not assume an antiquarian or surrealist stance. Steven and William Ladd house their beaded jewelry and accessories in boxes whose materials and detailing are as precious and precise as the objects that dwell inside. The Ladd brothers use contemporary materials in a direct and abstract manner. *Fire Tower* is a seemingly precarious stack of interlocking boxes, cantilevered like modern buildings. *Whale Box*, a silk-lined zippered case padded with sushi-like scrolls of fabric, provides lavish storage for a beaded purse.



STEVEN AND WILLIAM LADD
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK
Fire Tower, 2005
archival board, ultra suede, silk, glass beads
25 × 5 5/8 × 30 1/8 inches
Photo: Andrew Zuckerman

STEVEN AND WILLIAM LADD
BROOKLYN, NEW YORK
Whale Box (open), 2005
archival board, ultrasuede, silk, glass beads
17 × 16 1/2 × 5 1/5 inches
Photo: Andrew Zuckerman

Johan Van Aswegen made a black fabric-covered "mourning box," Looking Up, in memory of his deceased mother. The three cavities in the pristine box represent the artist and his two brothers. Each cavity holds an oxidized silver brooch fringed with eerie black teardrops that sway against each other when worn. The box is a kind of tomb or resting place for these melancholy works of art. Yet the brooches come out to reveal a mirrored surface behind them, bringing the dark box to life with a flash of light.

JOHAN VAN ASWEGEN
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND
Looking Up (Mourning Box), 1999-2003
enamel, oxidized silver, mixed media
box approx. 11 x 11 inches
Courtesy The Neeley Collection
Photo: Kevin Sprague

Jewelry has moved from the body to the box to the larger space of the museum or gallery. As jewelry makers establish an identity within the art world, they seek to explore the medium as a continuum of ideas expanding beyond personal adornment.

How can one begin to define the art of jewelry, if it is not limited to making objects that frame and flatter the human form? First, the discourse of jewelry addresses an infinite range of materials, from precious stones and metals to found objects, but jewelry always points, if indirectly or through deliberate rejection, to notions of the beautiful and the valuable. Jewelry is always, in some respect, a commentary on materials. Second, jewelry confronts relationships between bodies and things. Whether or not a jewelry artist's practice yields objects that can be worn, this practice figures the body in some way, even if by omission.

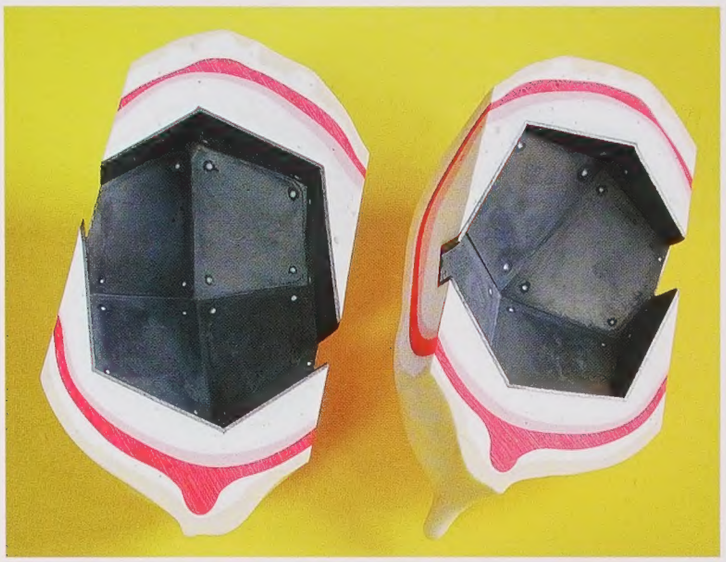
Gabriel Craig's *Craft Piece* consists of framed photographs of the human figure. Across these images wander gold-leafed snails. The snails adorn this depicted body, but in a temporary and mobile way. They incorporate a precious substance, in an unexpected manner.

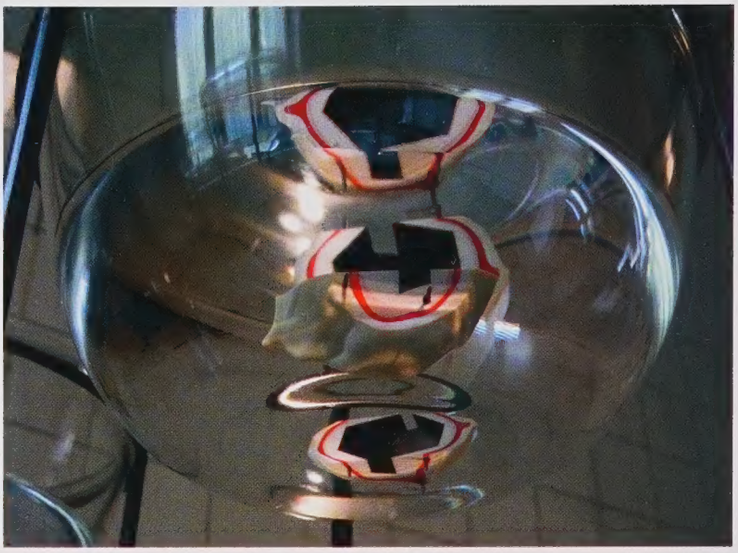
Iris Eichenberg, the Dutch-trained German artist who recently became head of the metalsmithing department at Cranbrook Academy of Art, constructs room-sized installations. Several projects use mirrors to explore the fronts and backs of objects as well as to draw viewers into experiences of their own bodies.

GABRIEL CRAIG
KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN
Craft Piece, 2006
23k gold leaf, color photographs, frames, live snails
dimensions variable
Photo: Gabriel Craig

IRIS EICHENBERG
BLOOMFIELD HILLS, MICHIGAN
Loss (installation at Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam), 2004
wood, wool, mirrors
mirrors 5 inches diameter

IRIS EICHENBERG
BLOOMFIELD HILLS, MICHIGAN
Sunen (brooches and installation), 2002
silver, mirror, plastic, mother of pearl
mirrors 5 × 10 inches
plastic brooches 3 × 4 inches
mother of pearl brooches 6 × 2 inches





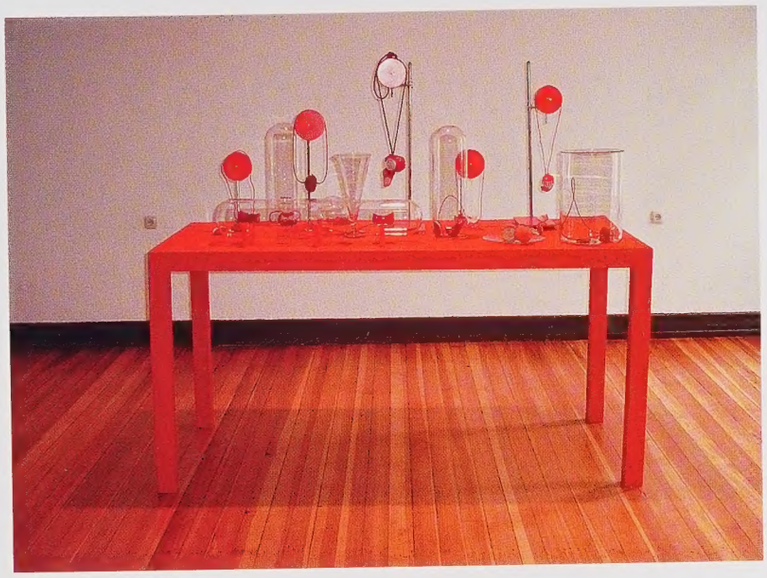
RUUDT PETERS
AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS
Azoth (installation at Ornamentum Gallery, Hudson, New York), 2006
metal, glass, water
display stands, 10 × 10 × 39 inches
Photo: Stefan Friedemann

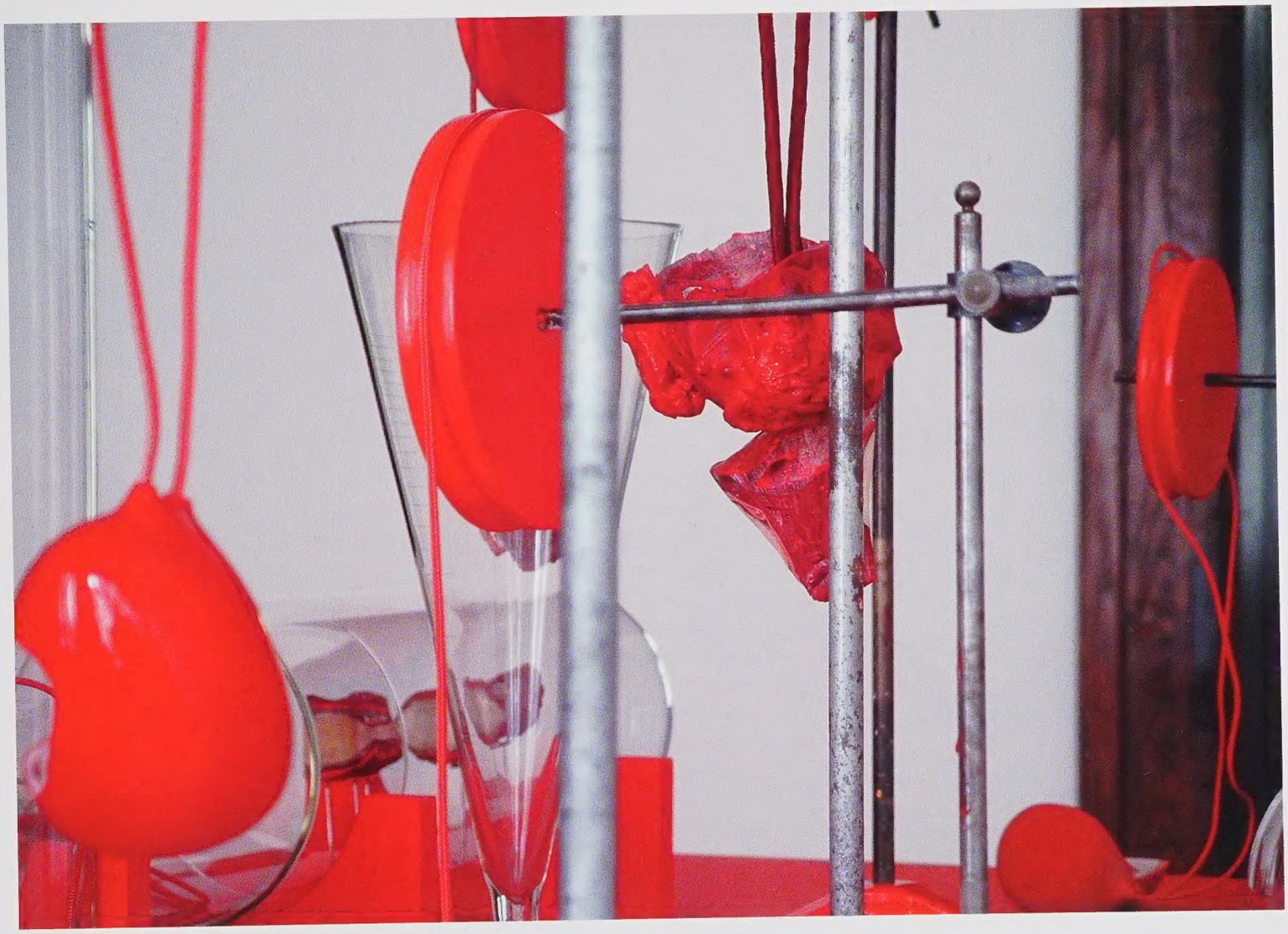
A leading figure in the area of jewelry and installation is Ruudt Peters, who trained as a jeweler and then worked as a sculptor before returning to his original field. In the early 1990s this Dutch artist began creating installations around his jewelry; at his exhibition *Interno* (1990), he displayed his brooches by pinning them to the lapels of men in black suits, who stood in the gallery for the opening. (The jackets were later hung on the wall.)

Much of Peters's work revolves around alchemical lore. A generation of jewelers in the Netherlands had rejected gold and silver in the early 1970s; the mystical science of alchemy gave Peters a way back into gold from a philosophical and spiritual point of view. The brooches on view in his exhibition *Azoth* consist of hollow prisms of oxidized silver that have been wrapped in layers of polyester and then sliced in half. These fabricated geological finds enact the alchemist's dream of forging pure and precious substances out of diverse materials. The sliced orbs are suspended over bowls of water that reflect the objects as well as building on the concept of azoth, the water of life, an elusive elixir of eternal life sought out by medieval alchemists.

Peters's installation *Iosis*, whose title is an alchemical term meaning the process of becoming red, presents another series of sliced geological fabrications within the tableau of a simulated scientific experiment. Pipes, flasks, pulleys, and ropes surround flesh-like orbs made of silver, cotton, polyurethane foam, and plastic.

Peters continues to work as a sculptor, creating pieces that are integrated into architecture. "I am a jewelry maker," he says. "I have no desire to make autonomous images. I search for a relationship with the architecture; my sculptures are present, but serviceable—just like my jewelry."





RUUDT PETERS
AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS
Iosis (installation at Villa Bengel,
Idar Oberstein, Germany), 2005
wood, steel, glass
table 78¾ × 35½ × 39 inches
Photo: Peter Krauss

E X I T

One way to frame the vast and varied art of jewelry is to look at it through the paradigm of the frame. This paper exhibition has looked at framing from various scales of reference, from the construction of individual pieces to how they are displayed, sold, and worn. To frame is to set forth a precious rock or a found object, or to edge the face or limb with loops or bands of ornament, or to box up objects in cases, cabinets, and rooms for protection and display.

My own favorite pair of earrings remains Betty Cooke's two bent pieces of gold wire. Given my spare personal taste, one might have expected to find on these pages a collection of austere and minimal artifacts. Indeed, just the opposite has transpired: in delving into the vast territory of contemporary jewelry, I was seduced by works that overflow with embellished surfaces and lush, painterly references, as well as by pieces that are stark, conceptual, even raw. What ties them together is the basic act of transforming materials and images by setting them apart from the realm of the ordinary.

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and to all the artists who generously participated.

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Top: Karin Seufert, brooch, pvc, reconstructed coral, rubber, silver
Bottom: Terhi Tolvanen, necklace 'swingy', hazelnut wood, smoky quartz, silver

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Stanley Lechtzin, *Torque 22-D*, 1971, electroformed and case silver and polyester resin, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Helen Williams Drutt Collection, 2002.391B

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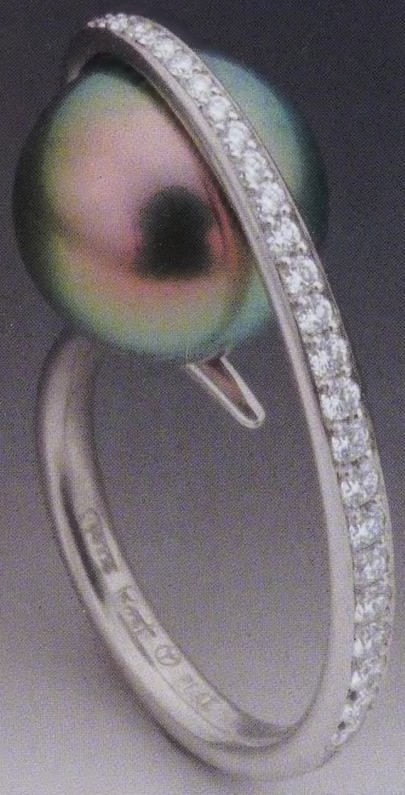

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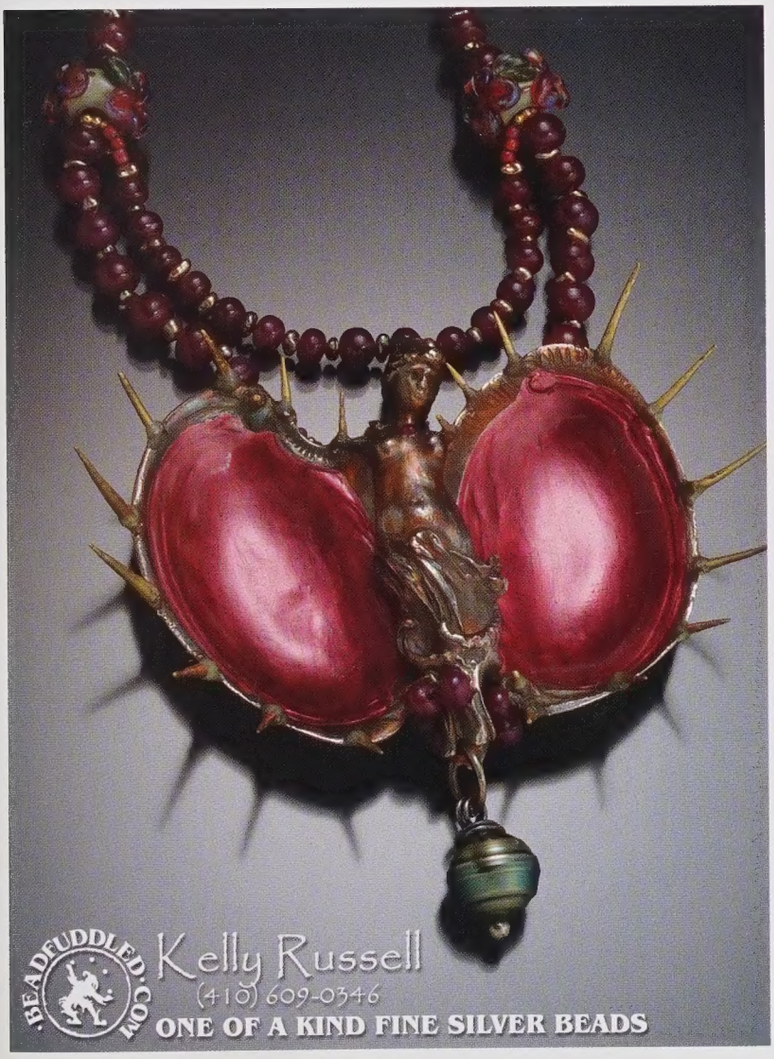

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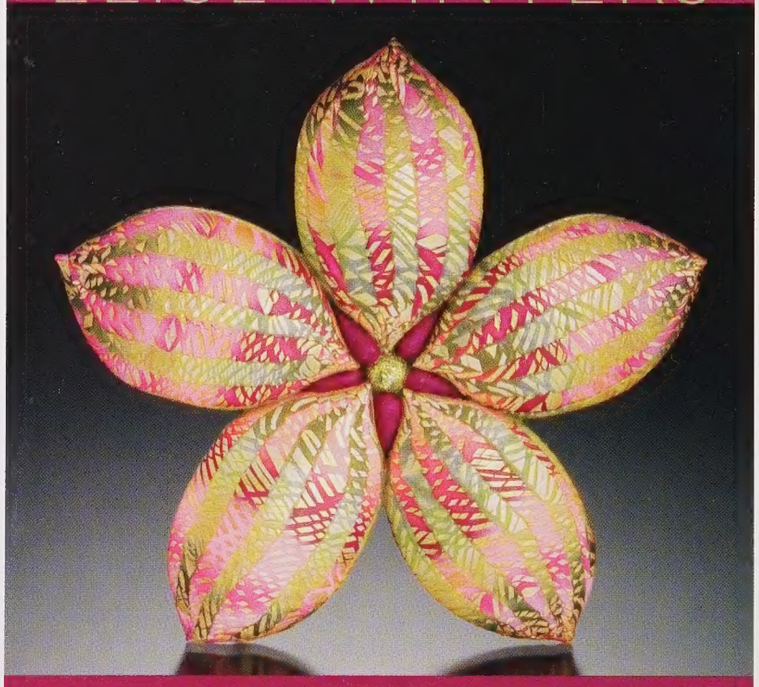

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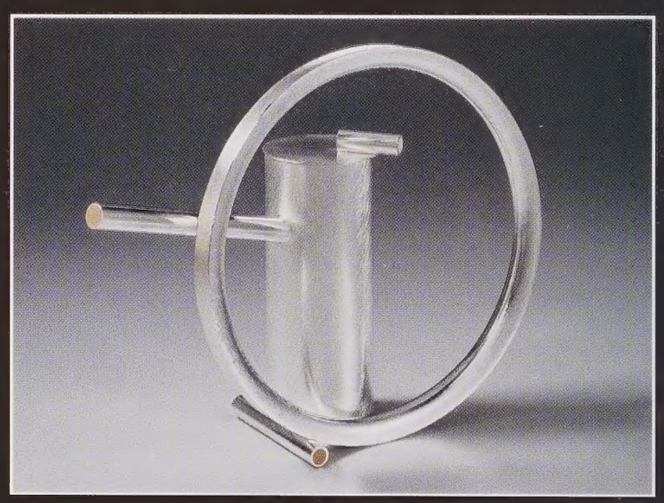

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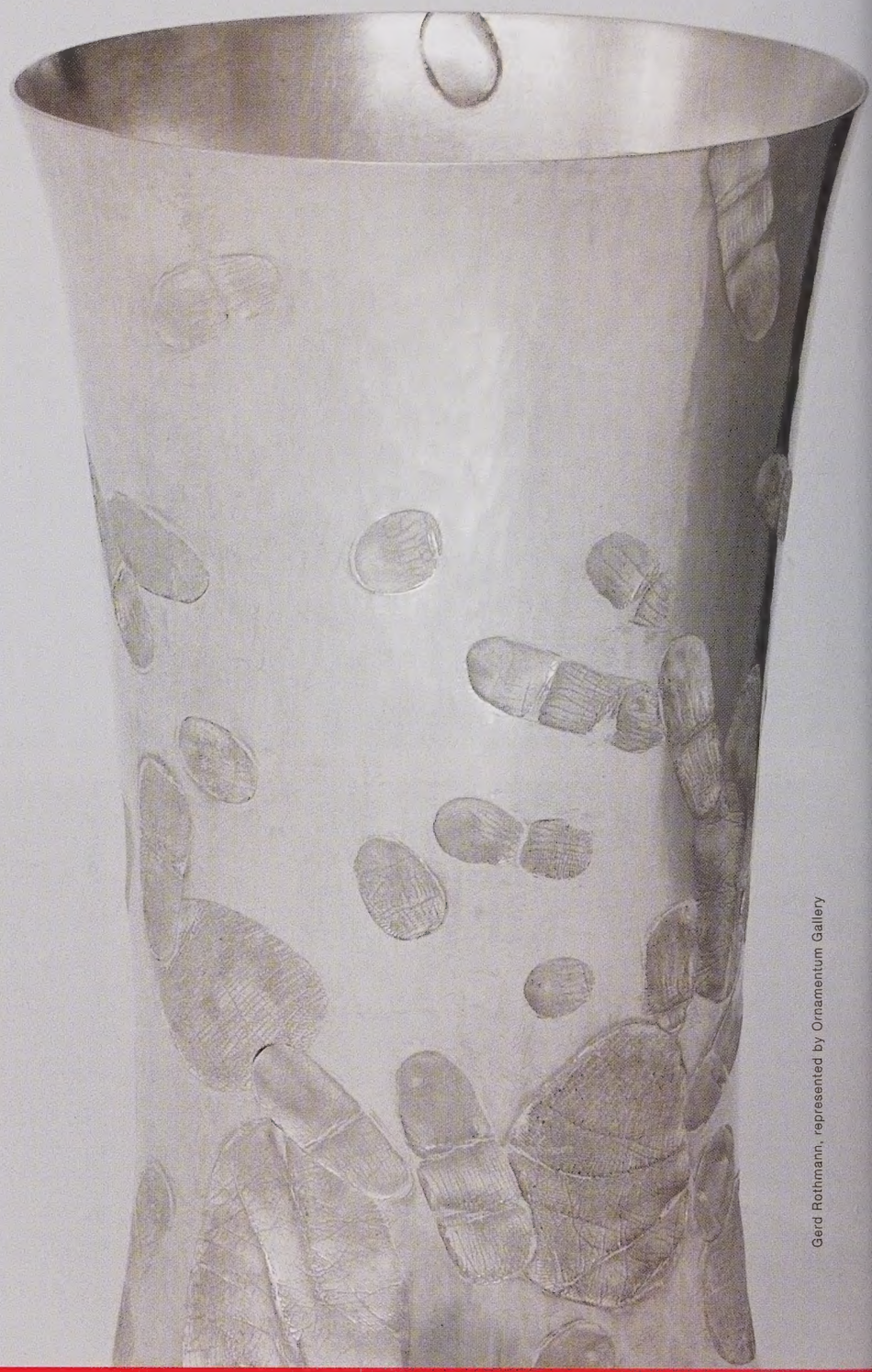

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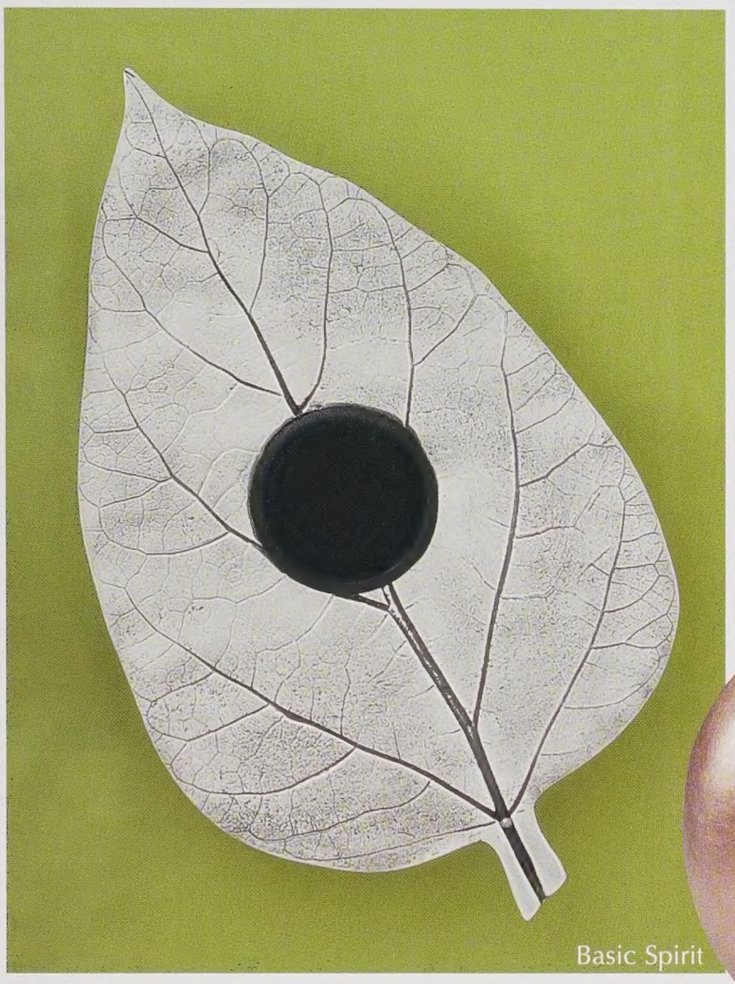
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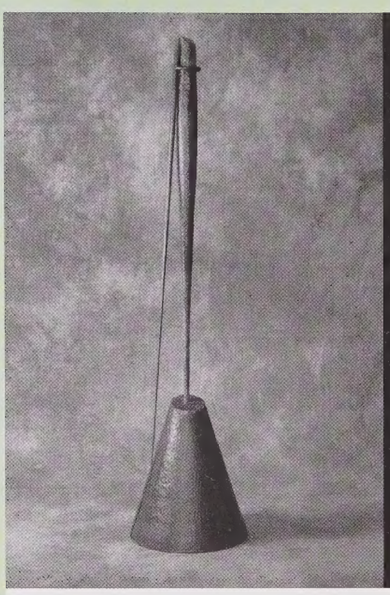

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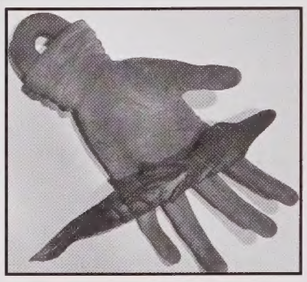

Von Allen, *The Alchemist's Hand*, 2006, Clay

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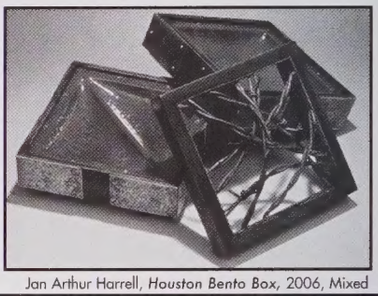

Jan Arthur Harrell, *Houston Bento Box*, 2006, Mixed

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clockwise from top

Douglas Harling
Title: Sea Saw
Description: 1-3/8"x2-1/4"x1/2", 22k gold, 14k gold pin mechanism, and freshwater pearls
Photo: Douglas Harling

Namu Cho
Title: Rings
Description: Damascus steel with 22k gold, 18k gold
Photo: Hap Sakwa Photography

(Issue #5 2006 Metalsmith)
Cover: Kevin Coates
Title: Snakes to Apples (cup) 2002
Description: height 6 1/2", nephryte jade, silver, parcel-gilt, part patinated, coral amber
Photo: Clarissa Bruce

Sarah Perkins
Title: Stubble Beggar's Bowl
Description: 3"x4"x4", copper, enamel
Photo: Sarah Perkins

Kiwon Wang
Title: Water Drop Series
Description: 2-1/2"x2-1/2"x3/8, 14k gold, pearl, sterling silver
Photo: Kiwon Wang

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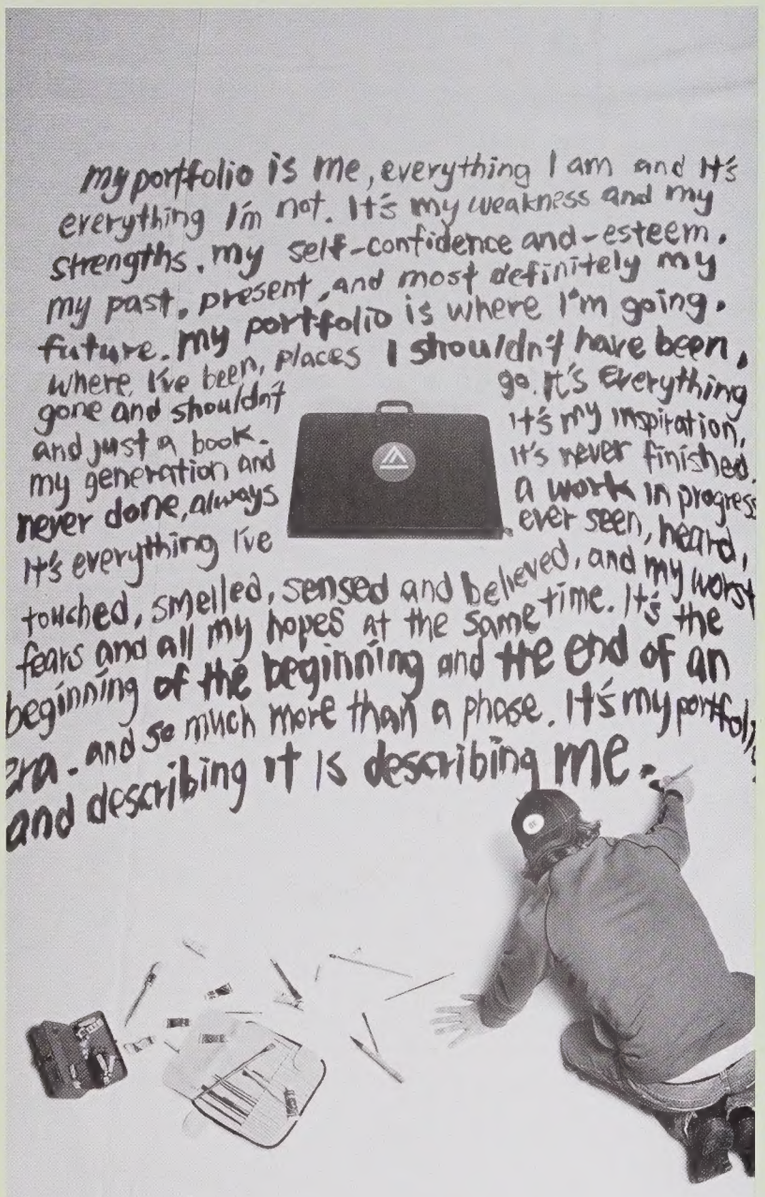
my portfolio is me, everything I am and it's everything I'm not. It's my weakness and my strengths, my self-confidence and -esteem, my past, present, and most definitely my future. my portfolio is where I'm going. where I've been, places I shouldn't have been, gone and shouldn't and just a book- my generation and never done, always It's everything I've go. It's everything it's my inspiration, it's never finished. a work in progress ever seen, heard, touched, smelled, sensed and believed, and my worst fears and all my hopes at the same time. It's the beginning of the beginning and the end of an era. and so much more than a phase. It's my portfol and describing it is describing me.

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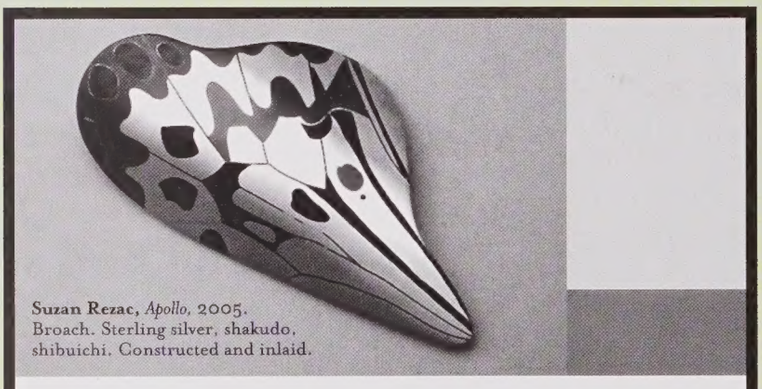

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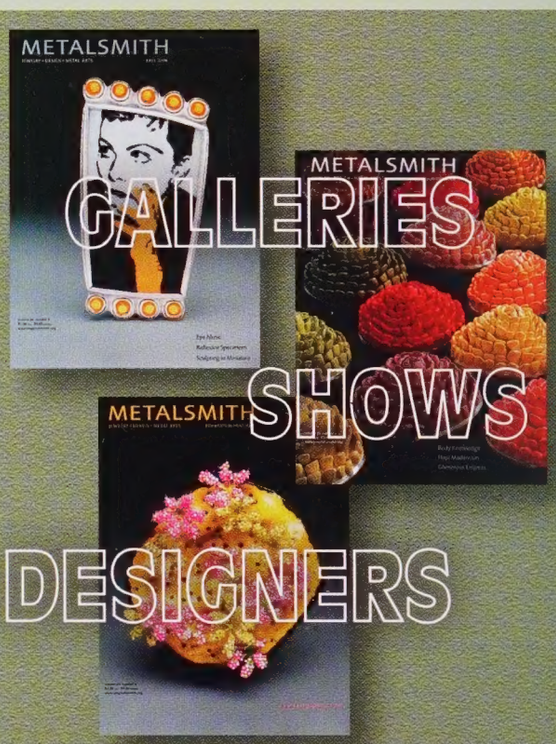

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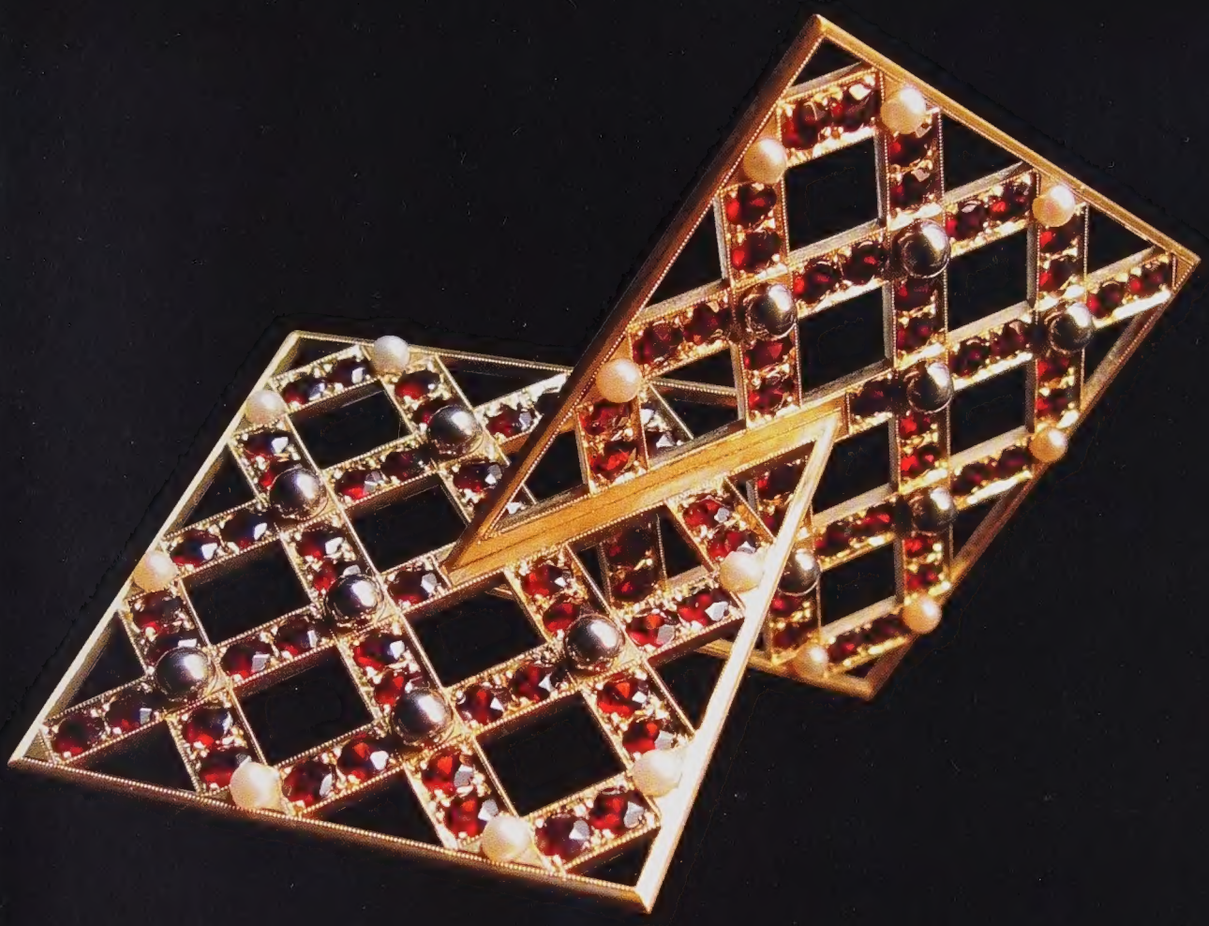

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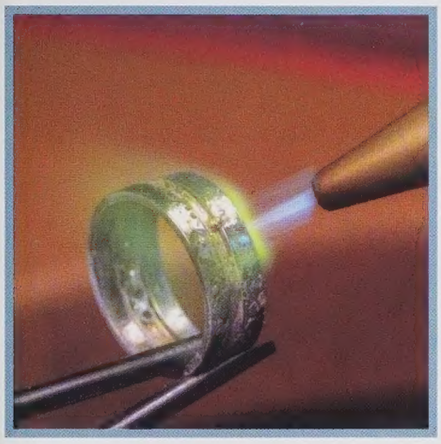

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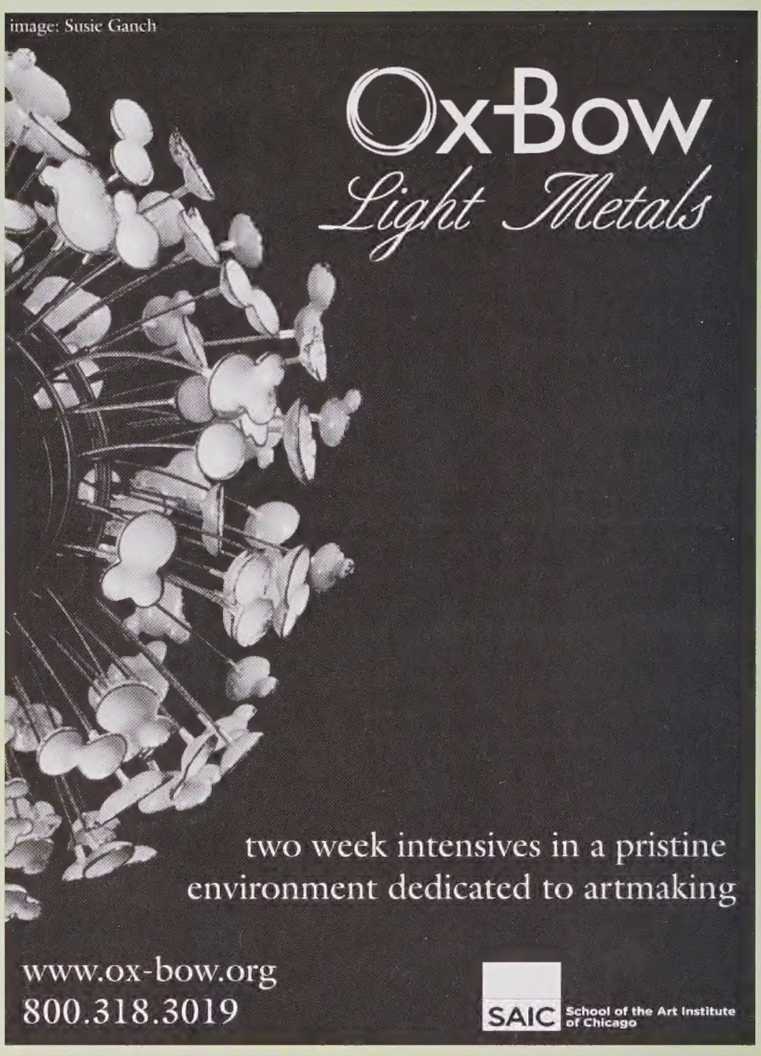

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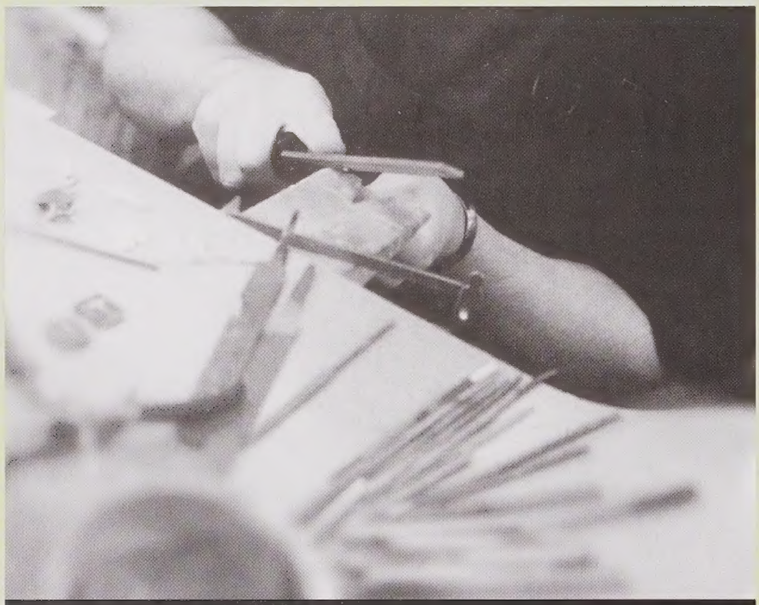

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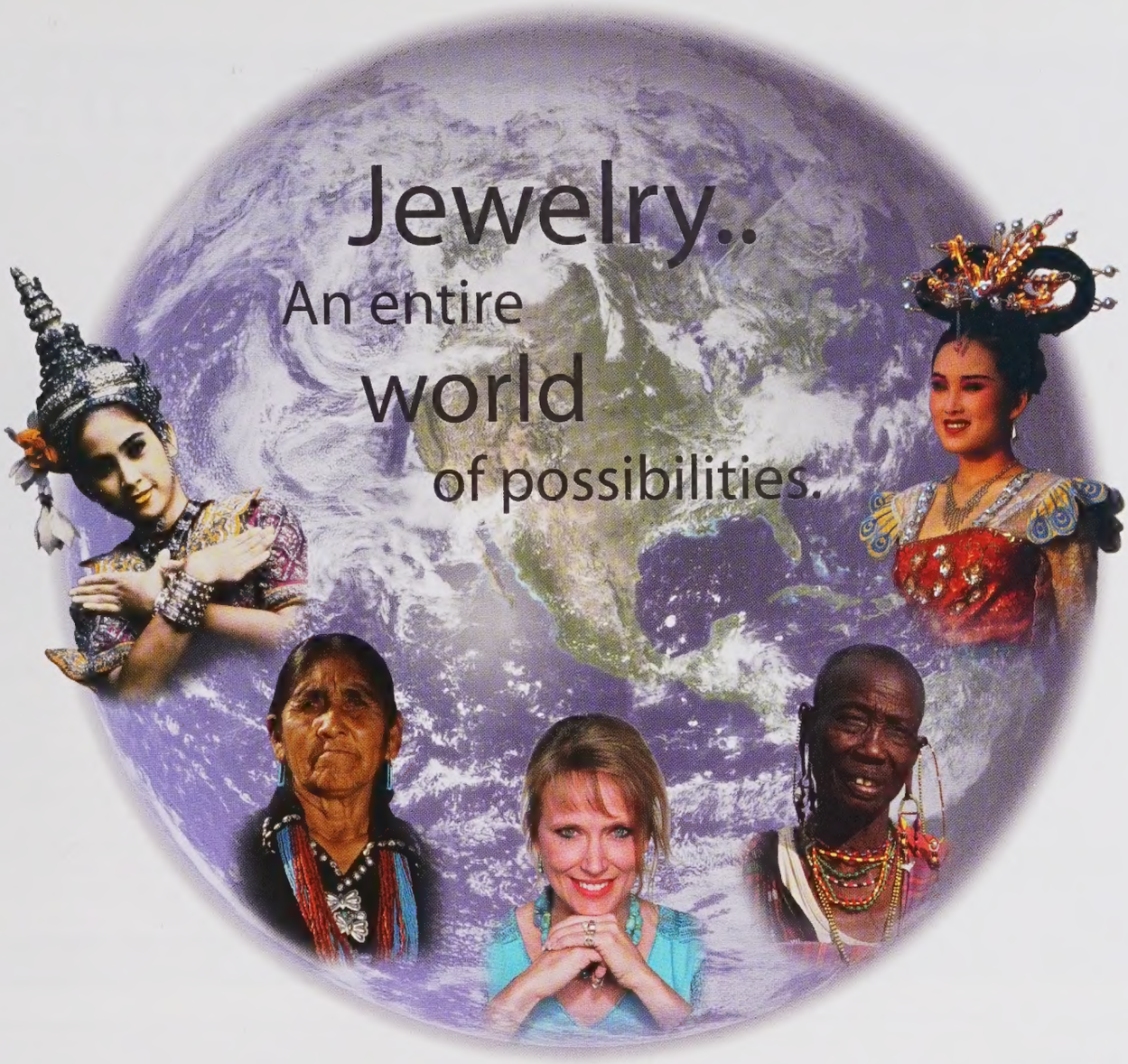

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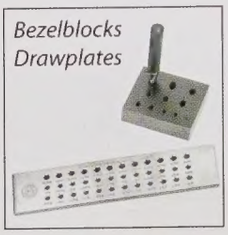

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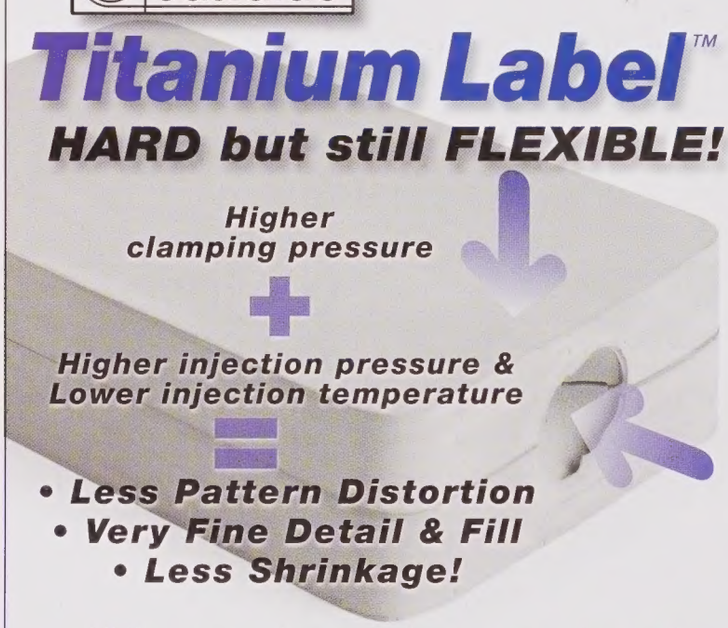

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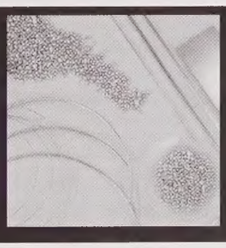

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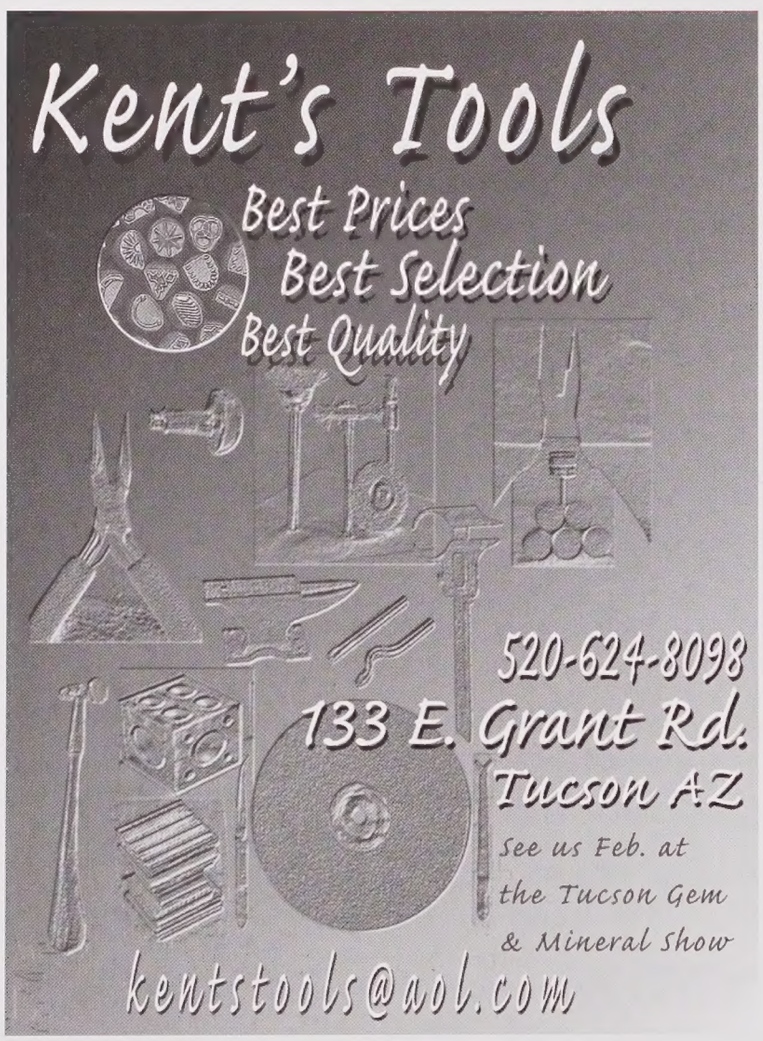

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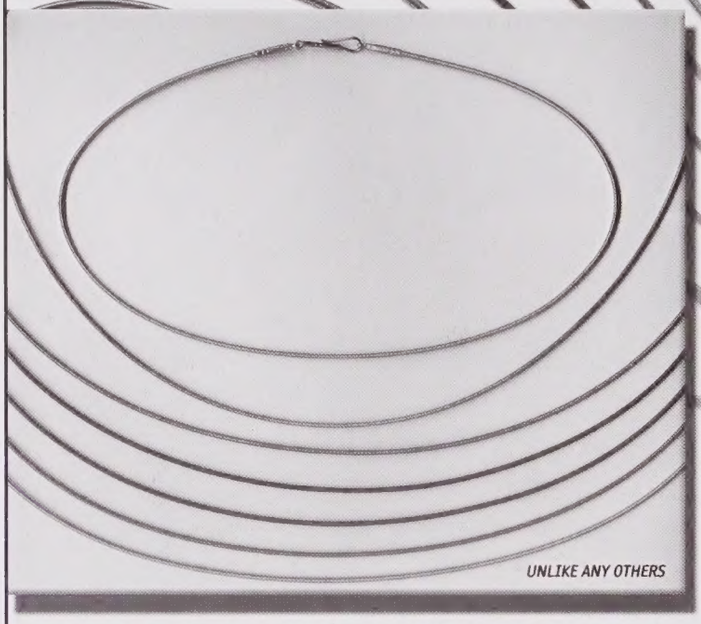

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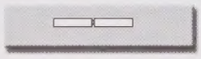

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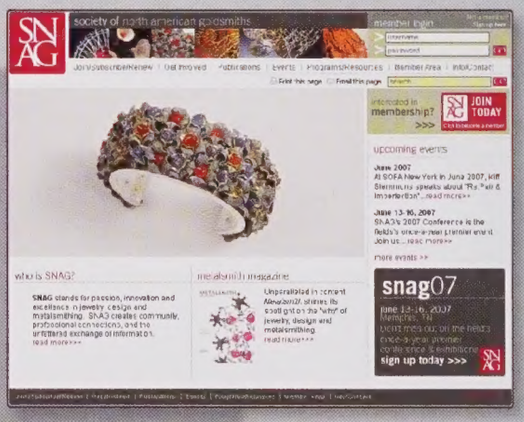

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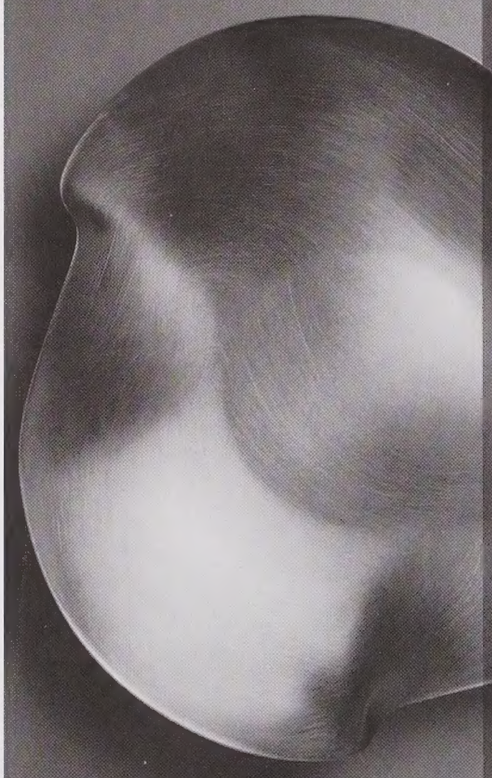

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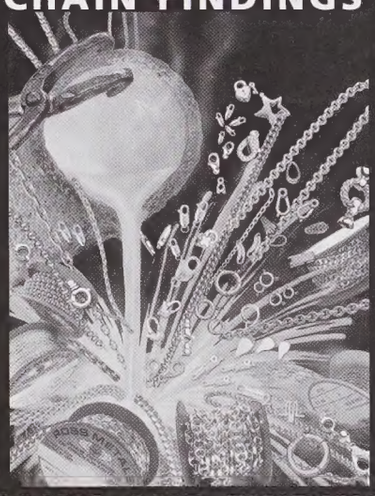

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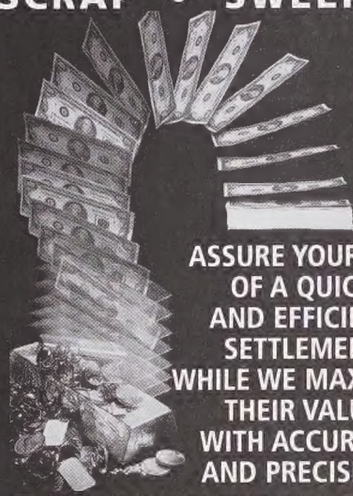

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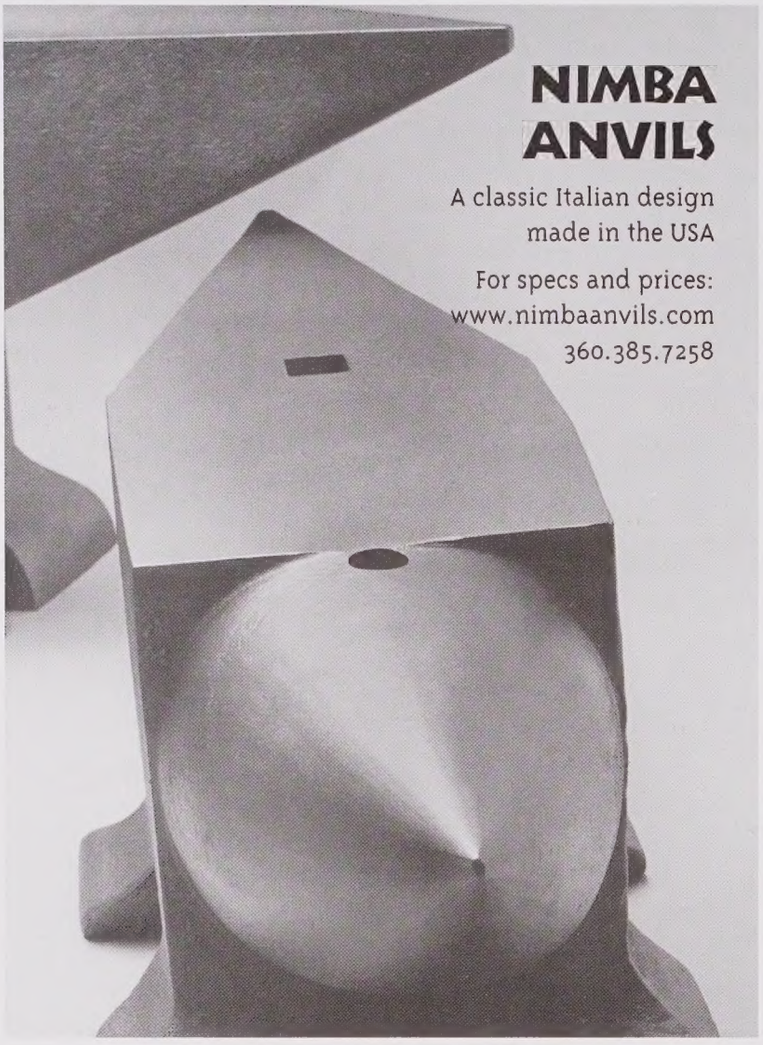

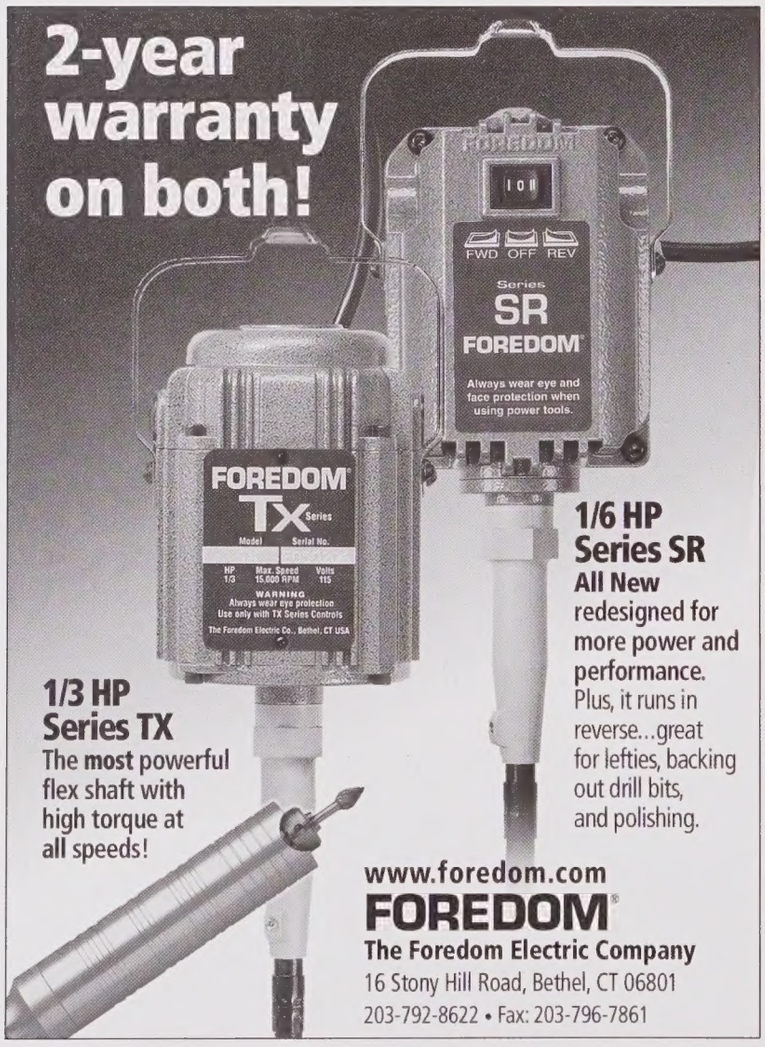

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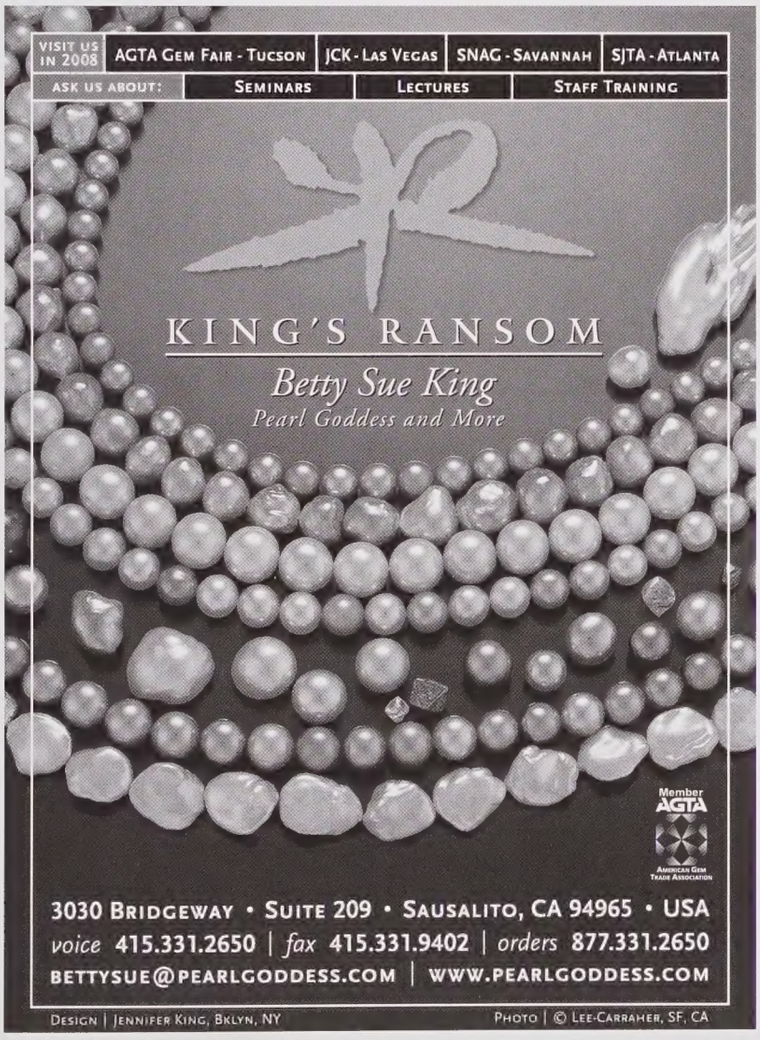

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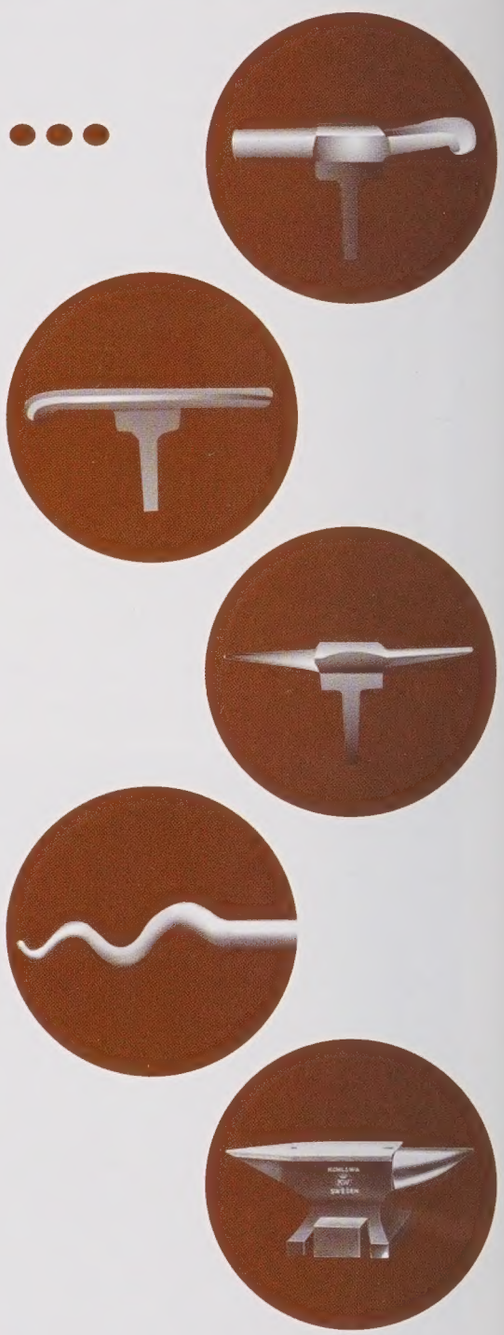

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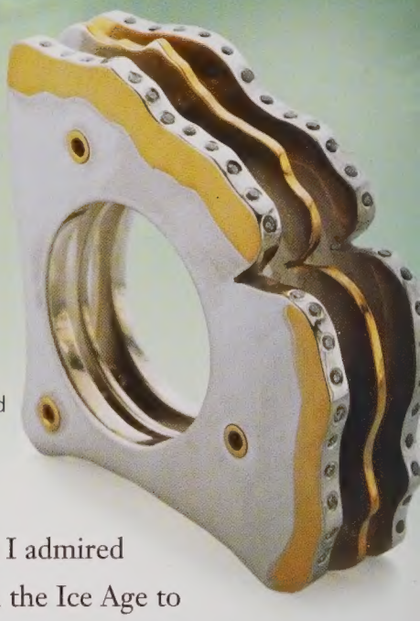

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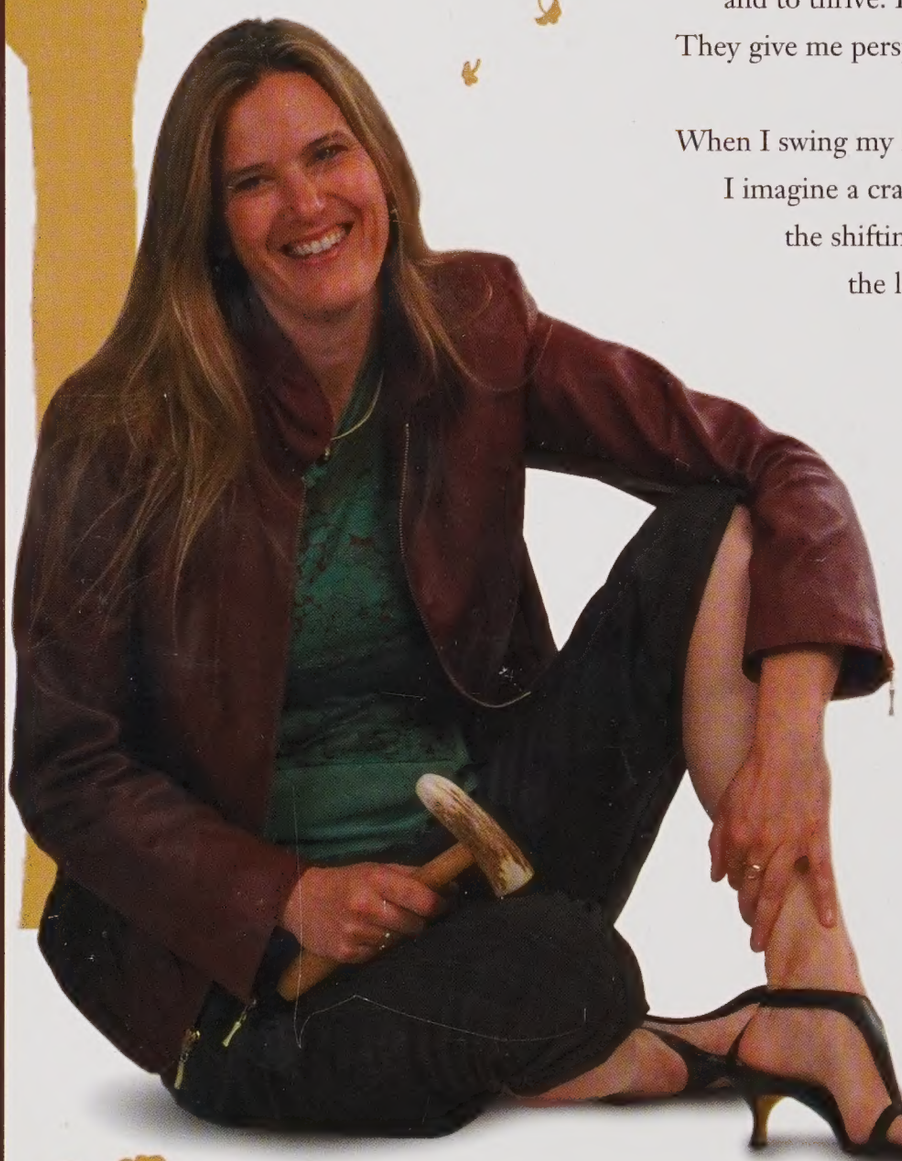
When I swing my hammer, I think of Thor's hammer creating thunder. I imagine a crashing storm, lightning splitting the very air with the shifting polarity of positive and negative charges. It is the lotus flower, rising from dark shadows into the light. It is the hard lesson that becomes a great blessing—enlightenment.

My magical hammer creates what's in my soul. Simple geometric shapes, like the building blocks that created everything on the planet, make me feel safe and secure. Their connections—morphing separate shapes into something different—help me tap into the spiral of life. Unchangeable, yet somehow changed. Always with a piece of me in it. Uncompromised.

As an emerging artist, I love creating the storm, seeing what comes of the lightning.



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